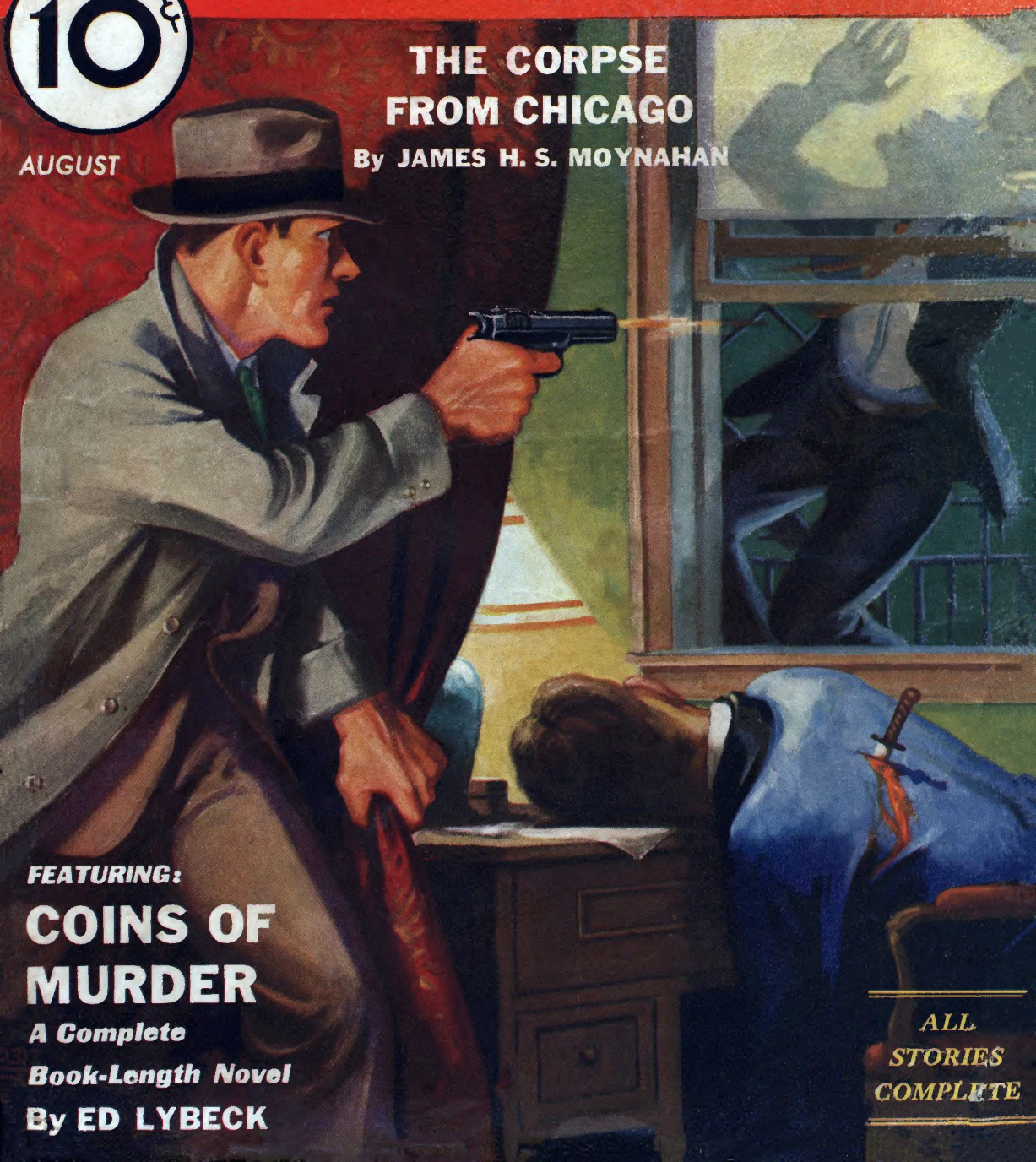
THRILLING DETECTIVE

10¢

AUGUST



THE CORPSE FROM CHICAGO

By JAMES H. S. MOYNAHAN

FEATURING:

COINS OF MURDER

A Complete Book-Length Novel

By ED LYBECK

ALL STORIES COMPLETE

STOP YOUR Rupture Worries!

Learn About My Perfected Unique Rupture Invention!

Why worry and suffer with that rupture any longer? *Learn now about my perfected rupture invention.* It has brought ease, comfort, and happiness to thousands by assisting Nature in relieving and curing many cases of reducible hernia! *You can imagine how happy* these thousands of rupture sufferers were when they wrote me to report relief, comfort and cures! How would YOU like to be able to *feel* that *same* happiness to sit down and write me such a message—a few months *from today?* Hurry—send coupon quick for Free Rupture Book, PROOF of results and invention revelation!

Mysterious-Acting Device Binds and Draws the Broken Parts Together as You Would a Broken Limb!

Surprisingly—continually—my perfected *Automatic Air* Cushions draw the broken parts together allowing Nature, the Great Healer, to swing into action! All the while you should experience the most *heavenly* comfort and security. *Look!* No obnoxious springs or pads or metal girdles! *No* salves or plasters! My *complete* Appliance is featherlite, durable, invisible, sanitary and *CHEAP IN PRICE!* Wouldn't YOU like to say "goodbye" to rupture worries and "hello" to NEW freedom . . . NEW glory in living . . . NEW happiness—with the help of Mother Nautre and my *mysterious-acting* Air Cushion Appliance?

C. E. Brooks
Inventor

BROOKS RUPTURE APPLIANCE SENT ON TRIAL!

My invention is never sold in stores nor by agents. Beware of imitations! You can get it only from my U. S. factories or from my 33 foreign offices! *And I'll send it to you on trial.* If you don't like it—if it doesn't "work"—it costs you NOTHING. But don't buy now. Get the facts about it FIRST! Write me today. I'll answer in plain, sealed envelope with amazing information *Free.* Stop Your Rupture Worries—send coupon now!

MAIL COUPON QUICK
For Free Rupture Revelations!

CONFIDENTIAL COUPON
for RUPTURE SUFFERERS

H. C. BROOKS,
603-J State Street, Marshall, Mich.

Rush me your new Free Book, amazing rupture method revelation, proof of results, *all without obligation,* and in plain, sealed envelope.

Name.....

Street.....

City..... *State*.....

State whether for Man ☐, Woman ☐, or Child ☐

★ This is the Actual Record as of December 31, 1932

YES SIR! *More than 10,000 men* have taken my course in Physical Instruction . . . think of it . . . 10,000 men who have gained big developed muscles, broad chests and strong legs by spending just a few minutes each day following my instructions. It makes me feel mighty proud to think that I am responsible for the physical fitness of this vast army!

Many of these men were sickly boys when they first came to me . . . too weak to raise their fists . . . TODAY they take their place with the many thousands who have doubled their strength and are proud of their prowess! Many of my pupils have won fame as Strength Athletes . . . winning great honors at the Olympic games.

WHAT ABOUT YOU? . . . Do YOU know the courage, strength and health that comes with physical development? I am sure you too would like to add 2 inches to each of your biceps . . . 3 inches to your chest . . . and have big muscular arms, a broad powerful back and legs that will be columns of power for speed and endurance. Give me 15 minutes a day and I will do just that. I will give you a he-man's physique that men will respect and women admire!

Read my guarantee that is unqualifiedly given to every pupil who enrolls—

"I WILL GUARANTEE TO ADD AT LEAST . . .

3 INCHES TO YOUR CHEST | 2 INCHES TO YOUR BICEPS

or it won't cost you one penny!" Signed: GEORGE F. JOWETT

And you are to be the sole judge—can anything be fairer than that?

All I want to do is to get you started on my secret method of muscle building! But . . . once you've started, it's easy, for when you see your muscles growing bigger and stronger everyday . . . when you feel yourself getting more 'pep' everyday . . . when you get up in the morning feeling like a million dollars you'll thank me for all I have done for you!

Don't wait any longer, get going NOW . . . Try one of my test courses first . . . it will give you the big URGE—

Send for "MOULDING A MIGHTY ARM" a Complete Course for 25c

It will be a revelation to you. You can't make a mistake. The guaranty of the strongest armed man in the world stands behind this course. I give you all the secrets of strength illustrated and explained as you like them. You, too, can get an unbreakable grip of steel and a Herculean arm. Try any one of my test courses at 25c. Or, try all six of them for only $1.00.

ILLUSTRATED BOOK INCLUDED FREE

I WILL INCLUDE A FREE COPY OF "Nerves of Steel, Muscles Like Iron". It describes my rise from a puny boy to be one of the world's strongest athletes. It explains all of my secret methods of development...it is brimful of pictures of famous strong men. It will awaken within you that desire for a strong powerful body, and it will show you how easy it is for you to be as strong as I am.

JOWETT INSTITUTE of PHYSICAL CULTURE
Dept. 86Vb 422 Poplar St., Scranton, Pa.

George F. Jowett: Your proposition looks good to me. Send, by return mail, prepaid, the courses checked below for which I am enclosing $_____

- ☐ Moulding a Mighty Arm, 25c
- ☐ Moulding a Mighty Back, 25c
- ☐ Moulding a Mighty Grip, 25c
- ☐ Moulding a Mighty Chest, 25c
- ☐ Moulding Mighty Legs, 25c
- ☐ Strong Man Stunts Made Easy, 25c
- ☐ All 6 Books for $1.00.

Name_____

Address_____

THRILLING DETECTIVE

Vol. VII, No. 2 HARVEY BURNS, *Editor* August, 1933

COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL

COINS OF MURDER ..... Ed Lybeck 8
Thrills, Suspense and Mystery on the Gory Trail of the Sinister Brand of Sudden Death!

TWO COMPLETE NOVELETTES

THE CORPSE FROM CHICAGO ..... James H. S. Moynahan 45
A Swift-Moving Story of Marijuana Murder

THE CHICKEN KING ..... Perley Poore Sheehan 81
Doctor Coffin Tracks Down the Poultry Racket Chief

THRILLING SHORT STORIES

THE GIORDANO MOB ..... Barry Brandon 60
Another Exciting Story of Ed. King, Speed Demon

PICTURE FRAME ..... H. M. Appel 73
Riddel Sets His Camera to Catch a Murderer

THE MURDER TRAIL ..... Allan K. Echols 95
Lester Duval Wanted to be an Underworld Big Shot

THE GUN ..... Arthur J. Burks 105
Gossie the Hophead Was Always Ready to Kill!

THE CRIMSON BLADE ..... John L. Benton 111
A Mysterious Knifing—and a Frame-Up

THRILLING FEATURES

FAMOUS CRIMES ..... Illustration 58
The Jekyll and Hyde Murderer, Dr. Bougrat

THE LOG CABIN MYSTERY: A BAFFLER ..... Detective Dunn 94
Can You Solve This Puzzling Mystery?

HEADQUARTERS ..... A Department 124
Where Readers, Writers and the Editor Meet

Published monthly by STANDARD MAGAZINES, INC., 570 Seventh Avenue, New York, N. Y. M. A. Goldsmith, President; N. L. Pines, Treasurer. Copyright, 1933, by Standard Magazines, Inc. Yearly, $1.20; single copies, $.10; foreign and Canadian, postage extra. Entered as second class matter Aug. 27, 1931, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under act of March 3, 1879.

Manuscripts must be accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelopes, and are submitted at the author's risk.

Read Our Companion Magazines: Thrilling Adventures and Thrilling Love

I'll Send My First Lesson *FREE*

It Shows How Easy it is to Learn at Home *to fill a* BIG PAY Radio Job

Here's Proof

"Made $6,000 in 2 Years"

"Soon after the depression started, I found myself without a job, but I was well protected with N. R. I. training. I swung right to full-time Radio servicing and I have made over $6,000 in a little over two years."
—WM SPARTIVENT, Sparty Radio Service, 93 Broadway, Newark, N. J.

Runs Successful Radio Business

"I am a member of the firm of South Grand Radio & Appliance Co., which runs a very successful business. The greater part of my success I owe to N. R. I. Without your training, I could never have been successful in Radio."
J. A. VAUGHN,
Grand Radio & App. Co.,
3107 S. Grand Blvd.,
St. Louis, Mo.

Does Radio Work in Spare Time

"I am operating a 120-acre farm. Three nights a week I teach a Radio class. On the other nights I make service calls. Words cannot express my gratitude to N. R. I. Your training prepared me to earn nice sums of cash in spare time."
HOYT MOORE,
R. R. 3, Box 919,
Indianapolis, Ind.

Clip the coupon and mail it. I'm so sure I can train you at home in your spare time for a big pay job in Radio that I'll send you my first lesson free. Examine it, read it, see how clear and easy it is to understand. Then you will know why many men with less than a grammar school education and no technical experience have become Radio Experts and are earning two to three times their former pay as a result of my training.

Many Radio Experts Make $50 to $100 a Week

In about ten years the Radio Industry has grown from $2,000,000 to hundreds of millions of dollars. Over 300,000 jobs have been created by this growth, and thousands more will be created by its continued development. Many men and young men with the right training—the kind of training I give you in the N.R.I. course—have stepped into Radio at two and three times their former salaries.

Get Ready Now for Jobs Like These

Broadcasting stations use engineers, operators, station managers, and pay up to $5,000 a year. Manufacturers continually employ testers, inspectors, foremen, engineers, service men, buyers, for jobs paying up to $6,000 a year. Radio Operators on ships enjoy life, see the world, with board and lodging free, and get good pay besides. Dealers and jobbers employ service men, salesmen, buyers, managers, and pay up to $100 a week. My book tells you about these and many other kinds of interesting Radio jobs.

Many Make $5, $10, $15 a Week Extra in Spare Time Almost at Once

The day you enroll with me, I send you instructions which you should master quickly for doing 28 Radio jobs common in most every neighborhood, for spare-time money. Throughout your course I send you information for servicing popular makes of sets! I give you the plans and ideas that have made $200 to $1,000 a year for N. R. I. men in their spare time. My course is famous as the course that pays for itself!

Television, Short Wave, Talking Movies Money-Back Agreement Included

Special training in Talking Movies, Television and Home Television experiments, Short Wave Radio, Radio's use in Aviation, Servicing and Merchandising Sets, Broadcasting, Commercial and Ship Stations are included. I am so sure that N.R.I. can train you satisfactorily that I will agree in writing to refund every penny of your tuition if you are not satisfied with my Lesson and Instruction Service upon completion.

You Don't Risk a Penny

Mail the coupon now. In addition to the sample lesson, I send my book, "Rich Rewards in Radio." It tells you where the good jobs are in Radio, what they pay; tells you about my course, what others who have taken it are doing and making. This offer is free to all residents of the United States and Canada over 15 years old. Find out what Radio offers you without the slightest obligation. ACT NOW!

J. E. SMITH, President
National Radio Institute, Dept. 3HM5, Washington, D. C.

SPECIAL Radio Equipment for Broad Practical Experience *Given Without Extra Charge*

My Course is not all theory. I'll show you how to use my special Radio Equipment for conducting experiments and building circuits which illustrate important principles used in such well-known sets as Westinghouse, General Electric, Philco, R. C. A., Victor, Majestic and others. You work out with your own hands many of the things you read in our lesson books. This 50-50 method of training makes learning at home easy, interesting, fascinating, intensely practical. You learn how sets work, why they work, how to make them work when they are out of order. Training like this shows up in your pay envelope—when you graduate you have had training and experience—you're not simply looking for a job where you can get experience.

With N.R.I. equipment, you learn to build and thoroughly understand set testing equipment—you can use N.R.I. equipment in your spare-time service work for extra money.

I have doubled and tripled the salaries of many. Find out about this tested way to *BIGGER PAY*

Test Lesson Free

FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY

J. E. SMITH, President
National Radio Institute, Dept. 3HM5
Washington, D. C.

I want to take advantage of your offer. Send me your Free Sample Lesson and your book, "Rich Rewards in Radio." I understand this request does not obligate me.
(Please Print Plainly.)

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

CITY.....STATE.....

"R"

The Famous Course That Pays For Itself

A NEW LIFETIME BUSINESS

OPENED TO EARNEST MEN

NO HIGH PRESSURE SELLING
NO HOUSE-TO-HOUSE CANVASSING

INCOME EQUAL TO REQUIREMENTS OF THE HIGH-GRADE BUSINESS MAN

E. Lawson, of Tennessee, cleans *$108 profit his first 3 days* in this business. He tops off these earnings with *$113 profit on a single deal* a few days later. J. C. May, Conn., cleared *$262.35 the first nine days he worked.* J. E. Loomis, Oregon, earns *$245 his first nine days.* A. W. Farnsworth, Utah, *nets $64.16 his first day,* a Saturday. S. Clair, New York, writes he is clearing as high as *$70 a day.* W. F. Main, Iowa, cleans up *$291.50 in 9 days.* B. Y. Becton, Kansas, starts out with *$530.35 net for 40 days work!* These men are beginners. How could they enter a field totally new to them and earn such remarkable sums in these desperate times? *Read the answer in this announcement.* Read about a new business that does away with the need for high pressure selling. A rich field that is creating new money-making frontiers for wide-awake men. *Those who enter now will pioneer—to them will go the choicest opportunities.*

FOUR $15 SALES DAILY PAY $280 WEEKLY

INSTALLING NEW BUSINESS SPECIALTY ON FREE TRIAL—MAKING TREMENDOUS CASH SAVINGS IN OPERATING COSTS FOR THOUSANDS OF CONCERNS THROUGHOUT THE U.S. AND CANADA

$4,707 Savings For One Kansas Store in Two Months

Sanders Ridgeway of Kansas invests *$88.60 and saves $4,707.00* between April 5th and June 29! Bowser Lumber and Feed Co., West Virginia, *invests $15,* report savings *well over $1,000.00!* Fox Ice and Coal Co., Wisconsin, save $3,564.00! Baltimore Sporting Goods Store *invests $45, saves $1,600!* Safety Auto Lock Corporation, New York, *invests $15, saves $686.45! With these and scores of similar results to display, our representatives interest every business man, from the very smallest to the very largest.* No one can dispute the proof in the photo-copies of actual letters which our men show.

NO HIGH PRESSURE—SIMPLY INSTALL—SELLS ITSELF

Here is a business offering an invention so successful that we make it sell itself. Our representatives simply tell what they offer, show proof of success in every line of business and every section of the country. *Then install the specialty without a dollar down.* It starts working at once, producing a cash saving that can be counted just like the cash register money. *The customer sees with his own eyes a big, immediate profit on his proposed investment.* Usually he has the investment, and his profit besides, before the representative returns. The representative calls back, collects his money. OUT OF EVERY $75 BUSINESS THE REPRESENTATIVE DOES, NEARLY $60 IS HIS OWN PROFIT! THE SMALLEST HE MAKES IS $5 ON A $7.50 INSTALLATION. Our men are making sales running into the hundreds. They are getting the attention of the largest concerns in the country and selling to the smaller businesses by the thousands. You can get exclusive rights. *Business is GOOD, in this line, in small towns or big city alike! It's on the boom now. Get in while the business is young!*

F. E. ARMSTRONG, Pres., Dept. 4047-G, Mobile, Alabama.

COMPLETE TRAINING FURNISHED

Every man with us today started at scratch, without previous experience, many coming out of clerking jobs, many out of small businesses, some out of large concerns. We teach you every angle of the business. We hand you the biggest money-making business of its kind in the country. You try out this business. ABSOLUTELY WITHOUT RISKING A RED COPPER CENT OF YOUR OWN. Can't possibly tell you all in the limited space available here. Mail the coupon now for full information—nothing to risk, everything to gain.

Brilliant Record of Success

America's foremost concerns are among our customers: Timken Silent Automatic Co., Central States Petroleum Corp., Houghton Mifflin Co., National Paper Co., International Coal, General Brake Service, National Radio, and scores of others nationally known. Thousands of small businesses everywhere, professional businesses, such as schools, hospitals, infirmaries, doctors, dentists, buy large installations and heavy repeat orders.

Customer Guaranteed Cash Profit

Customer gets signed certificate guaranteeing cash profit on his investment. Very few business men are so foolish as to turn down a proposition guaranteed to pay a profit, with proof from leading concerns that it does pay. *Protected by surety bonded national organization.*

Portfolio of References from America's Leading Concerns

is furnished you. A handsome, impressive portfolio that represents every leading type of business and profession. You show immediate, positive proof of success. Immediately forestalls the argument, "Doesn't fit my business." Shows that it does fit, and does make good. *Close the deal.*

Mail Coupon for Information

Complete training furnished. You try out this business absolutely without risking a penny. If you are looking for a man-size business free from the worries of other overcrowded lines, get in touch with us at once. *Use the coupon for convenience. It will bring you our proposition immediately.*

MAIL FOR FULL INFORMATION

F. E. ARMSTRONG, Pres.,
Dept. 4047-G, Mobile, Ala.

Without obligation to me, send me full information on your proposition.

Name .....

Street or Route .....

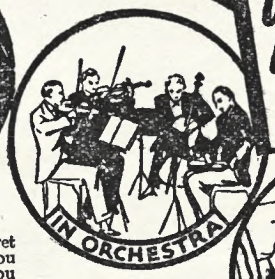
Box No. .....

City .....

State .....

POPULARITY, BIG INCOME, THRILLING FAME—*May Now be* YOURS!!

famous TONEKING *Professional* GUITAR *on Easy Payments*



Play a Guitar and get more out of life. You will be popular . . . you will be the life of the party . . . you will be the center of attraction . . . with the fellows—and the girls. Making money . . . BIG money is another advantage. You can join an orchestra or form your own as LEADER. The radio also offers you a golden opportunity. They're always LOOKING for new talent. Here's a new road to fame and fortune. **RUDY VALLEE, PAUL SPECHT, BUDDY ROGERS, PHIL BAKER, HARRY REISER, NICK LUCAS, SOUSA** and thousands of others have bought instruments from New York Band. You, too, can reach the top! It's easy! And the finest way to start is with a "Toneking" Concert Guitar. Ask your musical friends. They'll tell you what a sensational value we are offering in this announcement. But don't wait until it's too late . . . this offer is for a limited time only. Start now . . . fill in the coupon . . . THIS MINUTE. The sooner you start, the sooner you'll play . . . the sooner you'll begin to earn money.

Reference:
Manufacturers Trust Co., N. Y., or your own banker.

Genuine "Toneking" Concert Guitar

D-1 — "TONEKING" CONCERT GUITAR: Professional model, grand concert size. Arched top and swell back design, accoustically perfect. Rich dark Mahogany finish, shaded to golden amber. Selected spruce top; white Ivorite edge top and back; adjustable neck at heel insures perfect fingering and intonation and joins body at 14th fret; finger-board of slight convex type, inlaid with pearl dots. Complete with strings and full equipment. Has features of $50 outfit. Four string Tenor Guitar available at same price.

REGULAR PRICE $35.00 NOW . . . . .

$14.75

$3.50 DEPOSIT
Balance only $1 WEEKLY

FREE!! 6 Months Course Professional LESSONS!

A COMPLETE course of instructions on how to play the Guitar is given Free with each purchase. This home study course is the finest ever devised. It is simple and easy . . . and QUICK.

Guarantee!

After a few lessons you can play complete numbers. At the completion of the full course you will be as efficient as a professional.

FREE Catalog of All Musical Instruments on Request!

Fill in and Mail This Coupon *NOW!*

New York Band INSTRUMENT COMPANY

111 East 14th Street
New York
N. Y.

Gentlemen: Enclosed find $3.50 for which please send me Model D-1 Toneking Concert Guitar. I will pay balance of $11.25 at rate of $1 weekly.

Name .....

Address .....
Street City State

Box..... *R. F. D.*.....

He seized the teapot by the nozzle and flung its

COINS *of*

A Complete Book-

By ED

Author of "Cut-Throat,"

CHAPTER I

DEAD MAN MISSING!

KYNASTON, shoulders hunched against the wind, was bowling along Thirty-third Street when he saw the feet in the basement stairway.

They were well-shod feet. Feet that did not belong toes-up, in a dark basement stairway under a run-down Chinese laundry. And Kynaston, trained by years of observing details, paused for a second look.

The shoes were brown, pointed, oddly twisted—the one half under the other—and, in the poor light of a distant street lamp, Kynaston thought he saw silk socks. He grunted with faint surprise, stepped off the sidewalk into a shallow

Thrills, Suspense and Mystery on the Gory

boiling contents straight in the dark man's leering face.

MURDER

Length Novel

LYBECK

"Mud and Bullets," etc.

areaway—and bent with a hoarse exclamation as lead ricocheted from cement in the spot where his head had been!

Kynaston's reaction to shots was instinctive. Three years with the Canadians, a year on a motorcycle with the A. E. F., ten years in the Treasury Department's "Bureau of Intelligence"—had all combined to make it so. Even as the second bullet droned into the arch, his body was jack-knifing down the steps.

He landed jarringly on knees and one hand, felt something scatter ringingly around him, and jerked at his gun with his free hand. In front of him, a solid door was set level with the cement; at the top of the stairs, the archway—dimly outlined by street lights—was empty.

Trail of the Sinister Brand of Sudden Death!

Crouching there, gun in hand, Kynaston accustomed his eyes to the gloom. The objects about him became clearer; stood out more sharply in the filter of light from the street. He remembered that there was someone else on the stairs; a man. Jerking his eyes from the opening at the top of the flight of stairs for a moment, he flashed a glance sidewise and felt his blood congeal.

THE man lying beside him was of medium height and inclined to stoutness. His clothes were of good cut and neatly kept. On the right side of his cleft, clean-shaven chin, was a white triangular scar. His hair seemed to be sandy blond. Seemed to be; one could only guess. The upper half of his face was a welter of blood and meat; his skull had been cleft with a hatchet!

Kynaston whistled: "Whew!" threw a hasty look over his shoulder at the door set in cement, and started cat-walking up the stairs to the street.

His foot struck something that tinkled away across the cement. Stooping, half-absently, his groping fingers located a serrated disk, an inch and a half or so in diameter. He dropped it in his overcoat pocket —swore in sharp irritation as he felt it drop through a hole and roll into the lining—and continued toward the head of the stairs.

The street was quiet as before. No human stirred in it. No automobile exhaust shattered the half-lit silence. From the direction of Second Avenue, an El train boomed dully. Kynaston shook himself, drew a deep breath and—fingers across his lips—whistled shrilly.

The reply was instantaneous. From the dark front of a loft building across the way, light lanced sharply into the darkness. A dull "plop!" sounded, and Kynaston—dropping like a plummet at the flash —felt leaden fingers tug at his hat-brim.

Again, flame sped silently into the night. Again, Kynaston, hugging the protection of the low areaway, felt hot death sear his cheek. Then his own gun was clear and the narrow street erupted in sound.

Three—four—five times, the cords of his wrist contracted. Slugs poured in a leaden stream into a shuttered window on the ground floor of the building across the street. Sound rolled in a booming wave from building to building and toward the river. Then a high-pitched scream knifed through the tumult—glass shattered and crashed —and the figure of a man plunged head and shoulders through the wreck of the riddled window.

Kynaston waited only to see that the man made no further move. Then, gun at the ready, he was up and racing across the street. The big double doors of the loft building were unaccountably unlocked. Hurling himself through them, he saw for an instant a man outlined against a doorway at the far end of the narrow passage that ran the width of the structure.

THE man was tall and thin. So much Kynaston had time to see. Then his arm flashed up, a silenced bullet whined down the hall in the general direction of the double doors, and the figure disappeared—the door slamming behind him.

Kynaston followed cautiously. He was too old a hand to go racing down the dark hall, fling open the door and have his guts blown out from two feet away. But the thin man had apparently no such tricks in his bag. When Kynaston inched open the door and peered out, the weedy strip of muddy ground be-

hind the building was bare. The killer had made his escape toward the river.

Kynaston grunted, started to follow—and froze as the double doors to the street banged open again. A sharp light blazed into his eyes; a deep voice bawled:

"Drop it! Quick! Or you'll go to glory, blazin'!"

Kynaston, lowering his gun-hand, sighed in relief. "Okay, officer," he said. "Glad you came. It was me whistled for you." He started toward the light.

"Stay there!" snapped the voice. "An' *drop that gun!* Then I'll talk to you!"

KYNASTON grinned and, bending, laid the gun on the floor. Then, hands outstretched, he walked into the beam of the flashlight. "Just inside the top of my vest," he said. "Left side. Look for yourself."

The policeman came forward slowly. Behind the light he loomed, a huge, bulky figure; luckily for Kynaston, an officer of the old "hit-first-shoot-second" school. A beefy hand shot out; thick fingers turned over the flap of Kynaston's vest; a tiny gold badge reflected light. The policeman grunted: "Oh, yeah? Secret Service, eh? Let's see that gun, young fellow."

Kynaston retrieved it and held it out by the barrel. Stamped in the steel of the butt-plate, were the scrolled initials: U. S. S. S. The cop nodded heavily. "Guess you're all right, young fellow. Well, what's been goin' on?"

Kynaston shrugged. "Damned if I know. I thought you might have some dope on the thing. I came walking along the street—been playing cards on a boat off Thirty-fourth and couldn't find a taxi when I came ashore—and I saw a guy's feet sticking out of a basement across the street. I went down to have a look. The geezer was dead—"

The cop said: "What! Another one!"

"Yeah. Head split with an ax, I guess. Hell of a mess. And just then, somebody started winging away at me from over here. I got in an answer or two and put the somebody away for keeps. When I came busting into this dump, another gun was just making a getaway through the back door. I was thinking of having a look outside when you blew in. You're the man on the beat; what's the answer?"

The officer exclaimed: "How should I know? Let's see how he went." He led the way with the flashlight.

The narrow yard terminated in a fence the height of a man's shoulders. In the weedy, filled-in ground, footprints were deep where the fleeing man had leaped from the doorstep. From that point, broken-down weeds indicated the trail to the fence. On the other side was gravel and—a few feet out—an asphalt-coated alley. The cop turned to re-enter the building.

Kynaston halted him. "Wait a second. Let's have the light here once."

THE policeman turned, swung the beam to the point indicated and grinned as the Service man bent over the two deep imprints near the door.

"You can't prove much by that," he chuckled. "It shows the guy had two feet—but lots o' people 'll answer that description!"

"Mn-hm." Kynaston rose, pointing down at the prints. "And it also shows that the guy steps down hard on the inside of his feet. His weight is mostly on the inner side of heel and sole—and not many people do *that!*"

"No?" The policeman grunted disbelief.

"Nope." Kynaston stepped through the door. "Just see if you can think of anybody you know that does. Bet you can't. Savages walk like that—the Indians used to—but damned few white men do!" He broke off. "Hello; we've got company."

A radio car was braking down at the curb.

THE sergeant who leaped to the sidewalk was young and slender and snappy. His name was Gill and he had heard of Kynaston. That simplified matters.

He listened to the story as told him briefly and took charge competently. "You, O'Rourke, make the call-box and send in a report. Have 'em snap the examiner out here. An' a finger-printer an' a photographer. C'mon"—with a jerk of his head at the Service man—"we'll look over the stiff out front."

The man still hung as Kynaston had last seen him; half in, half out of the window. He was as dead as a human being can get. Three of the Service man's bullets had registered, any one of which would have been fatal. The sergeant grinned. "Nice shootin'!" and raised the head by its straight black hair.

A low-browed yellowish face stared up at them through wide-open slanted eyes. The button nose was scarred; the slash-like mouth hung slack over pointed teeth. Kynaston muttered: "A Chinaman!"

"Yeow." Sergeant Gill glanced at the silenced automatic lying by the dead gunman's hand. "There're a few of 'em in this neighborhood—but I hardly thought they'd got as modern as all that!" He bent suddenly. "Say, look at this!"

Kynaston followed his gaze. The dead man's left hand was spread, palm up, on the window sill. On the tight skin was purple tattooing; a bird, flying, with something—a twig—in its beak.

Kynaston started thoughtfully. "That ought to—"

Gill broke in excitedly: "A tong war o' some kind! That's what this is—the start of a tong war! You said the guy over the street was hatcheted. That makes it! One side usin' the old-time weapon an' the other boys givin' their hatchetmen guns! C'mon; we'll go look at him!"

Kynaston frowned. "No-o, I don't think so. The other guy isn't a Chink; he's white."

"Oh? Huh." Gill sounded disappointed. "Well, we'll see what he looks like, anyway."

He wheeled out the door, Kynaston following, and paced briskly across the street. They crossed the sidewalk, stepped into the shallow areaway and peered down into the arched stairway.

For an instant there was silence between them; heavy silence, pregnant with disbelief. Then Kynaston rasped a curse and Gill, frowning, looked at him strangely. The dark stairway was empty; there was no body there!

CHAPTER II

Birds of Ill Omen

KYNASTON recovered an instant before Gill. Gun in hand, he went leaping down the stairs, just as the sergeant's flash played a sharp beam around him.

The door at the bottom was tightly closed. On the level space before it was blood. Kynaston pointed to it. "That's where his head was lying! I almost need proof that I wasn't dreaming!"

Steel fingers clamped down on Kynaston's windpipe.

Gill said grimly: "You weren't!" He hammered on the door with drawn gun. "We'll darn quick see if he's in here!"

No one answered. Gill hammered again—harder. The burly O'Rourke appeared at the top of the stairs. "I called the—Mother o' Mercy! Ain't there s'posed to be a stiff in this—"

Gill snapped: "To hell with that! Come down an' lean on this door! An' holler to Johnny in the car to watch the cold meat over there. We don't want *him* disappearin', too!"

Kynaston muttered: "Listen!"

From the other side of the door came a squeaky voice: "Who want? You wantee somet'ing?"

Gill roared: "I want you! Open that door! Police!"

The door opened a crack. A wrinkled yellow face peered out. Then a heavy chain rattled across the planks and the Chinaman bowed in the doorway. "P'leece? Sure. You come in?"

"I wouldn't wonder!" Gill's sarcasm was heavy. "Where'd the stiff go, was out here? The body; the dead man?"

"Dead man?" The Chinaman's round face was blank. "No dead man. Nobody die here."

"No?" Gill brushed past him. "We'll just have a look. Bring 'im along, O'Rourke."

They went swiftly down a narrow, concrete-walled passage. Gill leading; O'Rourke propelling the Chinaman before him; Kynaston bringing up the rear.

The passage terminated abruptly in a bare-walled kitchen-like room. It was very small, decorated only by electric wire strung across the ceiling. The only furnishings were a stove, a tiny dish closet and a low, wide table. In the opposite wall was a doorway. At the table, a man and a girl—both Chinese—were eating boiled rice with chopsticks.

THE girl drew Kynaston's attention. Short—well-built—almost white, with a complexion of rose under old ivory. Her eyes, wide and but slightly oblique, were greenish and her full lips, parted in smile, disclosed tiny perfect teeth. It came to Kynaston suddenly that here was a really beautiful woman.

Gill was shouting questions at her. She smiled again and shook her head. Her mass of dark hair, piled pyramid-fashion, rocked slightly with the movement. An ornately carved jade comb gleamed in the light from the ceiling.

The Chinaman who had come to the door, put in: "Him no speak, sar. Him no catchee good English-talk like me."

O'Rourke growled: "You catchee hell maybe, if you don't come across with that stiff."

Gill, grunting assent, strode to the door in the further wall. It led to another tiny room, crowded with straw mats and wooden pallets. From it a winding iron stair led up to the laundry above. It was patent that a body could not be concealed in this crowded space. He turned and growled to Kynaston: "Nothin' here, huh? D'you suppose there could've been a taxi job, while you were across the street?"

The Service man shrugged and chewed at his lip. "Begins to look so," he admitted.

Gill squinted up the stairs reflectively, swung and jerked his head at O'Rourke. "C'mon; we'll have a look up above anyway. Bring the slant-eye along; we may want him."

Kynaston, leaning against the concrete wall, listened to the ring of their feet on the iron rungs but did not follow them up. Gazing, heavy-lidded, straight before him, he was watching the girl from the tail of his eye.

She was eating again—totally unconcerned—her tiny hands making bird-like motions with the slender chopsticks. Kynaston frowned. There was something about her—something that he should get, but couldn't—

She was very good-looking for one thing. *Too* good-looking, he thought savagely—and much too casual about this sudden intrusion of the police. Not like a woman. And those eyes— Danger there all right, if he knew anything about eyes. The way that pile of hair rocked as her head moved back and forth. And the carved comb, glittering like a huge snake-eye.

Kynaston's jaw clamped and he bit down hard on the exclamation that boiled up in him. He had it now. That damned comb! Worked into the intricate carving, was the flying bird he had seen tattooed in the dead gunman's hand!

THIRTY minutes later, having seen finger-printers come and go, Kynaston set fire to a cigarette and went swiftly up the street. As he went, he was frowning heavily. Many puzzling things had happened in the short time since he had been

fired at by the Chinaman hidden in the warehouse. Things to which Kynaston did not pretend to know the answers.

But of one thing he was reasonably certain. The startling series of crimes did not concern the city police alone; somewhere in the maze the Federal Government would have to take a hand.

Sure of this, he had asked Sergeant Gill as a favor to hold the three Chinese for questioning. And Gill, far from convinced of their complete innocence himself, had readily agreed. Meanwhile, there was no time to lose; the bureau would have to be notified.

RAISING his head as he came to the intersection, he became aware of a taxi drifting toward the curb. The driver, head pushed out past the windshield, was eyeing him inquiringly and, as Kynaston looked up, he braked down and half-opened the door invitingly.

The Service man grinned; grunted: "Mind reader!" and started to step in. One foot on the running board, he changed his mind. Shadows moved in the dark interior; steel flashed momentarily across a lighted square of window; a bulky form was rising to meet him.

Kynaston swore in his throat—a curse that was choked as steel fingers clamped down on his windpipe —and tried to get at his gun. More hands came through the door; there must have been two men in the cab. A fist struck at his upturned face; a clubbed revolver was swinging down.

Kynaston arched his back—swung sidewise with all the power in his muscular body—and let himself go suddenly limp over the edge of the running board. The sudden weight tore loose the grip that was strangling him. Pointed fingernails raked over his cheek. From the door of the cab came sharp exclamations in a sing-song tongue that was foreign to him. Then a square, flat face with oblique eyes came briefly into view and Kynaston, freed at last, was falling.

He landed on the back of his head, shook off the blow that threatened to stun him, and ripped the gun from his shoulder clip. The man in the cab door cried out and dodged hurriedly back. In the gloomy interior, a gun barrel flashed again. Kynaston whipped up his gun, heard footsteps crunch from the front of the cab, and whirled his head to see the driver swinging a wrench.

He tried to duck—succeeded partly—and took the blow on his right shoulder. His gun hand jerked and went numb. He rolled aside, gathered his legs across his chest and tried to lash out at his new assailant's middle.

Useless. The chauffeur, fresh to the confiict, was on him like a cat. His foot kicked away the wavering gun; his knee crushed the breath from the Service man's body; his glittering wrench swung down again.

The blow was well aimed. A star shell burst in Kynaston's brain and, with a gentle sigh of escaping breath, the consciousness seeped out of him.

A JARRING bump at the base of his spine awoke him. A staccato roar of exhaust was faint in his ears and a darting tail light was vanishing down the street. He lay on a strip of grass at the edge of a small park off Second Avenue, where he had evidently been thrown as the taxi swung the corner.

Thought of the taxi aroused him. He put his hand to his head, swore softly as pain coursed down behind his ears, and began to

go through his pockets. Somebody had beaten him to it. His watch was gone; so was his wallet and a bunch of loose report sheets he had in his inside pocket. His shoulder clip was empty.

He was cursing his luck for running head-on into a garden variety hold-up when he shoved his hand in his pants pocket and found the wad of loose bills that he usually carried there. That changed matters. They hadn't wanted money after all! He lunged to his feet and started down the street.

A BLOCK away he connected a phone booth in an all-night hashery. He dropped his nickel, got a wire; said: "Twenty-seven calling in. Get me the Big Shot, will you?" and started to reach for a cigarette.

His fumbling fingers didn't even succeed in getting it out of the pack. Henderson's voice was rasping over the wire: "Ky? Well, it's about time! Where the hell you been? I've been telephoning all over this damned town! Listen; get down here quick. I've got something that—"

Kynaston cut in: "I've got something myself, Big Shot. Something so big it hurts to think about it. It's liable to lift you right out from under your hat if—"

"Shut up!" Henderson's yell clawed at his ear-drums. "Shut up an' listen! I can't talk much. Hang up that darn receiver an' get down here—fast!" His strident voice went suddenly tired. "Please, Ky; don't argue. I need every man I can possibly raise—and you more'n any of 'em. Don't stop to chew the rag. Just get down here as quick as the Lord'll let you!"

Kynaston said grumblingly: "Oh, all right." He pressed down the hook, frowned at it—decided to take no chance this time. He released it again, called the bureau back and told 'em to send out Burton with a car.

Burton came in a matter of minutes. "A fine night!" he said, swinging open the Cadillac's rear door.

Kynaston's "swell!" was pure sarcasm.

CHAPTER III

The Gold Coin

MAJOR ANDREW HENDERSON, chief of the Bureau of Intelligence—Eastern Division—was short and fat and suave, with a weakness for stiff collars. But as Everard Kynaston opened the door of his private office, he was neither suave nor stiff-collared. His round face was red and perspiring; his stringy hair was black with sweat; the blue stripes of his knitted tie had faded wetly on to the front of his shirt. He whirled with a flood of raucous speech.

"Where the hell you been, Ky? Everything popping off and you not reporting in for hours! Lord, I've got to have every man I can possibly—"

Kynaston chopped: "What the hell's the matter?"

"Matter? Matter? My God, you ask me—" Henderson, on the verge of apoplexy, sank suddenly back in his chair. "I don't know," he said helplessly. "I don't know what *is* the matter. All I know—there's hell to pay in earnest.

"Here"—he reached into a drawer of the desk before him, picked out two round and shining objects and flung them heavily on the blotter—"just get a load o' those things!"

Kynaston fingered one of them idly. "Yeah. Fifty-dollar gold pieces.

Panama-Pacific Exposition issue. What's wrong with 'em?"

"Nothing." Henderson spread sweaty palms. "That's just the whole point, Ky. There's nothing the matter with 'em. Not one single little thing—except that the Treasury didn't make 'em and doesn't know they're out!"

"So?" The slender Service man pursed his lips and gazed at the coins on the blotter. The disks gleamed back at him dully, flatly, genuinely. On each was stamped *Panama-Pacific Exposition*—and the year of issue: 1915. He said absently: "Sort o' rare, aren't they?"

RARE!" Henderson's high-pitched laugh held a note of restrained hysteria. "Yeah, they're supposed to be. Practically a collector's item. The 'Exposition Coin,' as it's called, was struck in 1915 to commemorate the opening of the Panama Canal. There were exactly six hundred of 'em minted—thirty thousand dollars' worth. It's the only fifty-dollar gold piece that Congress has ever authorized and the dies were destroyed at once."

He paused, referred to a ruled sheet on the telephone stand at his side, and said in a voice that grated: "There are now, according to latest reports, a quarter of a million dollars' worth in the banks of this city alone! The Philadelphia Sub-Treasury reports a hundred thousand dollars' worth—my God! how could they be such dopes!—and the good Lord only knows how many more coming in!"

Kynaston, nodding thoughtfully, asked: "You've had 'em analyzed? What's the process? What's phony about 'em?"

"Nothing!" Henderson leaped from his chair and screamed it. "That's it, you fool! Can't you get it through that thick head of yours!" His voice rose and broke in a screech:

"They're gold coins! They're legal tender! Real money! But the Treasury didn't make 'em!"

For a moment the two men stared at each other. Then Henderson, regaining control of his nerves, growled an apology and dropped heavily into his seat. Kynaston sat on the edge of the desk. "Give us it straight," he said slowly. "How could they be gold? And if they are, what's the Treasury belly-aching about? They're getting it, aren't they?"

"Huh?" Henderson, wiping his streaming face with a handkerchief, looked queerly up at the star of his staff. "Your banking education's been neglected, Ky. I'll see if I can set you straight."

He paused, lifted the desk set and said into the receiver: "See if you can get Mr. Kane for me, now," hung up and turned to Kynaston again.

"It's really very simple. Gold is the standard of value simply because it's so scarce. You could put all the gold in the known world into a box forty feet square by forty feet deep. That's why it's valuable; that's why it's the standard of value in practically every civilized country."

Kynaston broke in impatiently: "Yes, yes. I know all that, but—"

HENDERSON waved him into silence. "Well, then—suppose the supply of gold were suddenly increased. Suppose it became as common as copper—or iron. It wouldn't be any more valuable than copper or iron. Our money—and that of other nations—would be worthless. We wouldn't be able to buy things.

"Finance would be paralyzed. Trade would be at a standstill.

People in cities would starve by the millions. We'd have riots—insurrections—civil war! It'd mean worldwide anarchy!"

His voice was rising again. He controlled it with an obvious effort and said:

"Don't you see, Ky? This flood of gold has got to be dammed. We've got to find out where it's coming from. And we've got to do it before it's too late.

"Right now, the Treasury doesn't know how much of the gold in its vaults is on the level. They don't even know how much gold is worth because they don't know how much of it there is any more. It isn't just this fifty-dollar piece, you understand. They may have a couple of million in smaller coins that they don't know about yet!

AND don't forget"—the voice was hoarse now—"if whoever is behind this thing can strike off gold coins, he can cast gold bars, too! The United States Treasury may not have an honest dollar in it!"

Kynaston blurted: "Could there have been an unannounced discovery of gold?"

"No! It's not unlawful to discover gold! The government'll buy it from you! And anyway, a big strike like that couldn't be kept quiet. It'd take too much machinery to mine it."

"That's so." The Service man nodded. "Then how do you—"

Henderson breathed deeply. "There's only one answer," he said. "And I pray to God I'm wrong. If I'm right, it may mean worldwide war—total loss of public morale—the end of the white race, even! But it's a thing that's got to be faced." His voice went low and hoarse. "Somebody's *making* it, Ky!"

Protest rose to Kynaston's lips. Rose—and was choked off unuttered. After all—why not? Gold *had* been made; platinum—even diamonds. In laboratory experiments, of course, and at a cost far above their actual value—but who could say that some genius had not discovered a way to cheapen the process? And why else should the possessor of gold risk coining it instead of disposing of it through normal channels? If—

He came out of his thoughts with a jerk. In Henderson's awful picture of world chaos, he had forgotten his own lead. His hand plunged into his overcoat pocket; his fingers found the hole in the corner of it, passed through and explored the lining—came out with the serrated disk he had found on the stairs in Thirty-third Street and tossed it on the desk. It rolled a few inches and toppled. A fifty-dollar gold piece—an Exposition Coin!

Henderson's eyes bulged out. He breathed: "Where'd you get that?"

Kynaston told him briefly. "And get this," he concluded. "I was roped into a taxi coming away, and slugged. There were two guys or maybe three in on it, and at least one of 'em was a Chink. They gave me a frisk and leafed off my wallet, watch and gun. But they left the thirty bucks in my pants pocket and tossed me out on Second Avenue. Laugh that one off!"

Henderson whistled softly and looked at his ace with disbelieving eyes. "You mean—" he murmured. "The coin? They couldn't've known—"

KYNASTON nodded slowly. "They *must've* been after the coin. The reason they didn't get it was that it had rolled down into the lining of my coat. When they didn't find it, they made a quick try at making the whole thing look like an ordinary stick-up. Though how they

could've known I had one, beats me."

Henderson threw out: "Probably it was just on a chance."

"Probably. But these birds don't seem to do things on chances. They *know!* Anyway, my dope is that it's some tong that's spreading these coins. That tattooed mark—the flying bird with a branch in its beak—is our clue. I knew there was something phony there. I got Sergeant Gill to promise to hold the three Chinks until I could get in touch with you.

I WANTED 'em questioned, although there isn't a shred of anything against 'em. We've got to find out what they represent; run down their tong connections. We've got to get hold of an authority on China and the Chinese—"

"I've got just the man for you!" Henderson's voice was excited. "He's—oh, hell!"

The telephone was ringing. He scooped it up; snapped: "Hello!"—then eagerly: "Oh, yes, Mr. Kane. Just talking about you. No sign of Corcoran, eh? H'm! Can't understand that. Yeah. Say, would you care to help us out on it? You would? Thanks! Yes—our Captain Kynaston. In half an hour? Fine. Good-by."

He dropped the desk set and turned to Kynaston. "That was Kane—Ogden Kane—"

"The author? The orientalist?"

"Yep. He's your Chinese authority. He's also a coin collector and coinage authority on the side. That's how he got into this in the first place. I sent for Corcoran, the Treasury coinage expert, this afternoon. He wired back that he was flying in and that he'd like to have Kane—who'd worked with him before—meet him at the airport. Kane loves that stuff and Corcoran likes to have him around to do his work for him.

"Kane went to the drome and met two planes. Corcoran wasn't on either of 'em and hasn't shown up since. I've wired Washington and they say he left there on schedule. It's very strange—but we can use Kane, unofficially, until Corcoran gets here."

Kynaston, buttoning his overcoat, nodded. "I've heard of him. Lives on the Avenue, doesn't he? In the Nineties? Well, Burton'll know, all right."

Hand on the doorknob, he paused. "Say—about this guy that I found on the stairs—the guy whose body disappeared afterwards. Gill thinks, by the way, that he was spirited away in a cab; he's got the river police looking for the body. But what I've got in my head is that that bird must've known something.

"The way I look at it, he got wise to what was going on and came to one of the distributing points—probably that loft building in Thirty-third—and tried to stage a hijacking. He must've come close to succeeding, too. There was gold on the stairs with his body and it's a cinch that that's why the corpse was stolen—to make sure there wouldn't be any coins found on it.

"The point is he might've tipped off somebody else—a pal or a skirt or something—as to what he had in mind. How about sending out a description and see can we get him identified?"

"Sure thing. Good idea." Henderson picked up a memo pad. "Better to do it ourselves, anyway. The cops won't bother much. They don't go for fancy murder mysteries. What'd he look like, Ky?"

Kynaston hesitated, frowning. "Not very unnatural, at that. Short—stocky—brown suit, shoes and

socks—sandy blond—cleft chin, clean-shaved—triangular scar on right side of his jaw—"

He broke off abruptly. "Hell! What's the matter, Andy?"

Henderson's pencil had clattered from nerveless fingers. His ruddy face was paper white; his hoarse voice was a croak: "Good God!" he gasped. "Good God, that's Corcoran! And nobody even knew he was coming! What *is* this thing we're bucking, Ky?"

CHAPTER IV

Murder Strikes Again

AS HE went down in the automatic lift, Kynaston was still asking himself that question. What were they bucking?

Something that defied the laws of physics and made gold? Something that knew the secrets of Washington and murdered its special agents? Something that had looked on the world—found it not good—and decided to remake it? He blew out his breath like a swimmer in deep water and stepped out into the basement garage.

Burton—Department chauffeur—was waiting for him beside a Cadillac sedan. He saluted smartly. "All set, Captain?" and swung open the rear door.

Kynaston gestured toward it. "You ride in there," he said. "I feel like driving. Want to get my mind off something." He slid in behind the wheel.

But driving did not ease his mind. The shifting of gears became mechanical. As the big car rolled uptown, his thoughts revolved once more about the problems with which he was faced.

How had Corcoran been lured to his death—and with what purpose? How had his body been spirited away under the very noses of the police? And had the hold-up on himself really been staged with a view to recovering the coin he had picked up? It must have been—yet who could have known—

In a desperate effort to clear his brain—to regard the thing objectively—he swung across to Broadway, into the remnants of early morning traffic; through the torturous windings of Times Square. It was there that he heard the newsboys crying extras.

Gradually, the words impinged on his consciousness. There was something about "gold" — "banks" — Abruptly, he pulled to the curb, tossed a coin to a boy and snatched up a paper. Black headlines stared up at him:

ALL BANKS TO CLOSE TOMORROW!

U. S. MAY GO OFF GOLD STANDARD

(Special Dispatch from Washington)

The President, in extraordinary executive session with his Cabinet, tonight, decreed that all banks in the country suspend activity until further notice is given by the Treasury Department.

"There is no immediate danger," he told reporters. "The holiday is merely declared for the purpose of taking stock of the situation and restoring public confidence."

"Restoring confidence!" Kynaston, letting in the clutch, laughed without humor. Verbal camouflage! The world—its finance—the whole structure on which civilization was built, was beginning to totter. This was unmistakably the beginning. What would be the end?

HIS mouth closed in a grim line as he swung the car toward Central Park. From the back seat, Burton spoke: "Jeeze, that's bad, ain't it, Captain? We won't be able to get

our dough—an' I got a kid needs doctors. Oh, well"—he laughed uneasily—"they'll pull us out of it somehow, I s'pose." He returned to the perusal of the paper.

Kynaston did not answer. He was thinking: "They! *They'll* pull us out!" And who were "They?" The answer came back to him sharply: "You!"

With a staggering shock of responsibility, he recognized the truth of the answer. He—Everard Kynaston, captain of Secret Service—held more threads in the tangle than anyone else. It was up to him; the money market depended on him!

HE sighed, swung into the exit at Ninety-sixth—saw flame knife from the hedge at his left and heard glass shatter behind him. Something wet and sticky spurted across his neck. Burton groaned and fell forward—and Kynaston's foot was tramping the brake.

In the rear seat, Burton was crumpled on back and left shoulder. His staring eyes were fixed glassily on the roof of the car. From a jagged hole in his throat, the bright arterial blood was spurting. Through the crimson tide could be seen the ragged ends of the severed jugular. Kynaston gasped. "A dum-dum bullet!"

Cold rage swept over him and engulfed him. Rage at the death of Burton—a father with a sick kid. Rage at the conscienceless killer who would rip out a man's throat with a weapon outlawed even in war time. Ripping Burton's gun from its holster, he crashed recklessly into the shrubbery.

There was no one there; no one on the sidewalk below. Across the street, a tall man in a gray topcoat was disappearing through a doorway. A hundred yards down the Avenue, a taxi was just picking up a fare. A private car was swinging into Ninety-seventh at high speed. It was impossible to follow all. Cursing in impotent despair, he turned and ran back to the Cadillac.

Burton's weary heart had stopped pumping blood. His corpse, drained of its life blood, was waxy white in the crimson pool. Kynaston combed the car pockets, found a flashlight and, snapping it on, went back through the bushes carefully.

Almost at once he found what he had been trying to convince himself that he would not find: Evidence that the killing had not been accidental. Behind a thick clump of hedge, footprints were plain in the soft earth. Two cigarette butts of common brand had been tramped into the ground. The assassin had known he was coming this way; had deliberately waited to kill him! It was for him—Kynaston—supposedly riding in the rear seat, that the leaden message of death had been meant!

And the footprints—a gasp rose to Kynaston's lips—had been made by a man who carried his weight on the inside of his feet! The man who had tried to kill him in Thirty-third Street!

RUSH as he would, it took twenty-five minutes to get a patrolman, identify himself again and get permission to leave the scene of the murder. Once it was reluctantly given, he was off. Ten minutes later he was ringing the bell at an ornate rococo structure just off the Avenue itself.

A tall man with a black hairline mustache and the spare figure of the trained athlete opened the door for him. His olive skin was stretched tight over high cheek bones. His left hand was covered by a gray kidskin glove. English tailoring

covered his slender body perfectly. He smiled, exposing perfect teeth.

"Captain Kynaston? I've been awaiting you. Glad to see you, I'm sure. You're half an hour overdue; I was beginning to be afraid you weren't coming after all."

He shut the door, shook hands in a tight hard grip; said simply: "I'm Ogden Kane, as perhaps you know," and gestured toward the open door of a darkly paneled library.

Kynaston shucked hat and coat and entered the designated room. It was severely furnished in leather and literally lined with books. The Service man glanced at the nearest titles—China—Indo-China. The Mysticism of the East. In one corner was a glass case, displaying ancient coins.

HE sighed and sank into a leather chair. Kane rang for drinks. When the silent butler had come and gone—leaving excellent Scotch and seltzer—he lit a cigarette, offered one to the Service man, and leaned forward. "Well," he smiled, "let's have it. I'm so interested in the Treasury's little problems, I must confess that I'm really glad that Corcoran didn't come."

Kynaston said dryly: "He came."

"Oh?" Kane looked up at him with a puzzled frown. "Well, then —I don't understand—"

"He's dead. Murdered — and thrown in a basement stairway!" The Service man paused to drain his drink, heard Kane's horrified exclamation, and said abruptly:

"That fact has changed the face of the problem altogether. We're going at the thing from a different angle now. We can't get a lead through the actual coinage; to hell with that for the time being. But we've got something else. What I'm crashing in on you for like this —what I really want—is some of your professional knowledge of the Orient. I'm told it's practically unequaled."

The dark man inclined his head in modest acceptance of the compliment. "I was born there," he said simply. "Lived in North China for thirty years, off and on, and been studying and writing about it all my life. That's been my work; my hobby's been coins and coinage. I think I can honestly claim to know as much about either as any man alive. I shall be glad to aid you in any way I can."

"Thanks. That's swell of you." The Service man wasted no further time in preliminaries. He plunged in directly: "Do you know of any tong or clan in China or this country that brands or tattooes its members with a picture of a flying bird?"

"A flying bird, eh?" Kane's brilliant black eyes narrowed a little; his thin lips pursed under the black mustache. He asked: "Has this bird a branch in its beak, may I ask?"

"Right!" Kynaston came upright in his chair. "What is it? Do you know it?"

"Yes, I know it well. Too well!" The orientalist smiled grimly. "It is the sign of the Dove-and-Olive-Branch; the brand of Tai p'ing—the Society of Eternal Peace. Or, as it has often been nick-named in China, The Brand of the Sudden Death!"

HIS smile grew wry and strident, bitterness lay in his voice: "The Brand of the Sudden Death! They are called that because the Society of Tai p'ing has a quaint way of branding enemies as well as friends." He raised his gloved left hand; said drily: "Artificial!"

Kynaston started. "You've run into them, yourself!"

"Yes. Years ago. The Tai p'ing

is the most powerful secret society in China — and greedy for more power. Unknown to but few outside their own membership, they control China now; have done so for some years, in fact. But that does not satisfy their leader. He looks toward Russia—toward U. S.—toward world-dominion, indeed!—though not through force of arms.

"Under him, the Society of Tai p'ing has revived the ancient State Religion—the worship of Shan-ti. I blundered into a temple in Northern Hu-Nan, thought it was a forgotten ruin, and proceeded to look around. For that, I lost my hand!"

THE bitter smile flashed again. "In a way, it was fortunate for me that I was discovered soon. Had I had time to remove anything, I should have lost my life!"

Kynaston was hardly listening. "World dominion?" he snapped. "You said they probably aimed at world dominion — but not through force of arms. What did you mean by that?"

"Well"—the dark man shrugged—"they could hardly set out to conquer the world with an antiquated army that cannot even stem the Japanese invasion. But through propaganda; through dissemination of the gospel of Shan-ti; through judicious assassination of ruling heads—"

Kynaston's gasp cut him off. The Service man's eyes were wide. He breathed: "Through disruption of world coinage? Through destruction of the Gold Standard?"

"Yes." Kane nodded soberly. "I wasn't going to mention that—thought it might sound too highly improbable—but I believe that that was really the basis of the whole plan."

He broke off suddenly and his own eyes widened. "Whew! I didn't get the connection. Coinage—Tai p'ing—Gold Standard! I begin to see what you're driving at with your questions, Captain. Tell me just how matters stand, and I'll be glad to give you whatever information I can."

Kynaston complied. He fed it to him fast and straight and awaited reply in silent expectation.

It was not long in coming. The Orientalist was smiling. "You have the key in your hands, I think," he said. "Or, at least, *one* of the keys. The other should not be too difficult."

He paused, poured Scotch in a glass and drank it neatly. Then he sat forward in the arm-chair and spoke in a low, deep voice:

"The Society of Tai p'ing is an ancient institution. Chartered six hundred years ago, in the reign of Genghis Khan, as a school of philosophy and learning in emulation of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, it slowly degenerated into a band of brigands and rebels against authority.

"In the middle of the last century the Society headed an open revolt against the Emperor: the famous Tai p'ing Rebellion. It was unsuccessful—due largely to hired soldiers, imported by the Emperor to fight for the State.

"However, at one time it looked as though the rebels would win and the more enterprising members of this hired soldiery—some of them refugees from the Civil War in this country—went over to the Tai p'ings in order to share the fruits of the expected victory.

MOST of them were put to death in the wholesale executions that followed the quashing of the uprising, but some escaped. And it was around one of these—a Viriginian veteran of the Confederacy, who

took the Mongolian name of Ogdai and claimed lineal descent from Genghis Khan! — that the shattered forces of Tai p'ing were secretly rallied in the mountain fastnesses of Manchuria.

"From there, their influence spread. Originally composed of war-like Mongols, the band subjugated and intimidated until—working entirely under cover—they forced the abdication of the Emperor in nineteen-twelve and placed the government of China in the hands of their own men.

"It was then that their Khan, or leader—Ogdai—began to dream of world-dominion through these same measures of intimidation and stealthy assassination. One of his pet schemes, it was rumored, was the flooding of Europe and America with spurious gold coinage — just how, I confess I do not know—so as to destroy the Standard of Exchange and bring on financial panic and class war. He was maturing this plan when he died."

Kynaston, following intently, nodded. "Swell. But how does that—"

THE student of China leaned back in his chair. His black eyes gleamed at Kynaston. "I'm coming down to your case right now," he said. "But I had to sketch in the historical background for you so you'd be able to understand what's afoot."

He cleared his throat and continued: "This Ogdai left a son by a Mongol woman to carry on the work. But the son was himself old by the time his octogenarian father died. His contribution was negligible. He ruled the Tai p'ings for a scant half-dozen years and died, leaving a son and a daughter.

"It is they who lead the movement today. They rule mainly through superstition. They bind their half-savage followers to them by claiming to be immortal spirits, returned to earth again. The son claims to be the reincarnation of his grandfather, Ogdai; the daughter of the pagan goddess Wu-San. And both are worshiped as gods by their fanatical followers.

"I have seen this Wu-San several times. She is a woman of singular beauty—almost white through her grandfather's Virginia blood. Once seen, she is not to be easily forgotten. I had heard rumors that she was to be smuggled into this country.

"And from the description which you have just given me, I am practically certain that it was she whom the police took into custody in the Thirty-third Street laundry basement. You have her where you want her. Watch her carefully. Through her you can get your hands on her brother, Ogdai, and write finis to your case!"

KYNASTON had scarcely waited to hear the end. In a bound he was at the phone. He snatched it up; snapped: "Police Headquarters! Quick!" and got it.

"Listen; this is Kynaston. Yeah; Captain Kynaston of the Federals. Can you get me in touch with Sergeant Gill? He's there now?—Fine! Get him on, will you?"

Gill's staccato voice was already in his ear. "Hello—you, Captain? Good! I had to come down here an' make a report, but I was going to get in touch with you as soon as—"

Kynaston interrupted: "Listen; about that woman you had in Thirty-third Street—"

And was interrupted in turn: "*Had* is good! She scrammed on us! O'Rourke was guarding her down in the basement, waiting for the patrol. He swears he didn't move out of the doorway till the

wagon came — but o' course he'd have to say that anyway. I guess he stepped out for a beer. Anyway, she's gone. An' now the other two slant-eyes 've hung themselves in detention cells! Now what d'you make o' that!"

CHAPTER V

TRAPPED!

"GONE!" The word dropped dully from Kynaston's lips as he turned away from the phone. "And the other two suicides! Fanatics, bumping themselves off to make sure the cops wouldn't be able to get anything out of 'em! God, what a headless, tailless mess!"

Kane, pacing the floor, was rapping curses. "Damn it! I might've known it! They'd get her free some way if every Tai p'ing in the country had to lay down his life to do it. And here I sat, gabbing away—"

Kynaston waved a dismissing hand. "That wouldn't have made any difference. She was gone before that. O'Rourke must have—"

He brought himself up abruptly; said in a musing tone; "O'Rourke wouldn't have walked away. He didn't strike me as the type to pull anything like that. O'Rourke's a cop of the old school. Put him in a place and he stays there. If he swears he didn't leave that door, I'll bet a year's salary that he didn't!"

"But she—"

"And Corcoran's body!" Kynaston's eyes snapped fire; he slapped fist into open palm and leaped to his feet. "That disappeared the same way. The police theory is all wrong! Don't you see it now? They *couldn't* have had a car pick it up—not with us right across the street! There must be a—"

"Secret panel!" Kane breathed.

"Right! Or a hidden exit. The cops frisked the joint, but they were looking for a body; not for a door or passage. I'm going down there right now and give it a good going over!"

Kane was already out in the hall. He appeared with Kynaston's coat. "Mind if I go along?" he asked. "I've got a Hispano that's quicker than walking."

"Swell!" The Service man shrugged into his coat. "Be glad to have you"—he paused—"but if there's—"

"Come on." Kane, leading the way to the garage in the rear, held up his artificial hand and pointed to it. "Never mind issuing any warnings about possible danger. You forget that I've got a little something to even up with this Tai p'ing outfit."

Kynaston, thinking of Burton, said grimly: "Good. That makes two of us!"

THE run across town was swift. The big Hispano ate up distance like a robin swallowing a worm. In almost less time than the saying, they were braking down a half-block away from the laundry in Thirty-third.

The place was dark and silent. Kynaston had half expected that the police might leave a guard, but evidently they had deemed the precaution unnecessary. No one answered his heavy knock.

In the darkness beside him, Kane chuckled: "What does a good law-abiding detective do in a case like this?"

"Hopes his keys'll work," grunted Kynaston.

The fifth one did; not easily, but sufficiently to throw the bar of the lock. The chain had not been replaced. The door swung open before them.

The concrete-walled passage was dark now. Kynaston brought a flash from his pocket and, spraying the

low hall with light, proceeded toward the apartment at the rear. Kane, pushing the door shut, followed close behind.

In the kitchen Kynaston located the light button and snapped on the electrics. Things were practically as before. Everything in the bare room was apparently in plain sight. There had been no need for the police to move the few furnishings around in their search for the body of Corcoran.

KYNASTON fingered his chin and walked to the bedroom doorway opposite.

The straw mats had been shifted, but otherwise here, too, things were much as they had been.

Kane asked: "What'll we do—sound around?"

"Yeah." Kynaston nodded slowly. "That's about the best way, I guess. There must be a hidden exit someplace." He asked abruptly: "Got a gun?"

"Always." The Orientalist slipped an efficient looking automatic from under the flap of his trench coat. "When you're away from civilization as much as I am, you sort of get in the habit."

"Good!" Kynaston gestured toward the sleeping room. "You tap around in there; the walls especially, but don't overlook anything. Use the butt of your gun and listen for hollow sounds. And don't take it for granted that anything's solid just because it looks so. I'll go over the kitchen. If we can't get a rise anywhere else, we'll try along the stairs."

Kane nodded agreement and passed through the open doorway. Kynaston, stepping aside, let his gaze rove over the kitchen in search of a likely place to start.

It didn't seem to make much difference. The walls, under close scrutiny, all looked genuine enough. The only breaks in their solid fronts were the two doors and the closet.

Kynaston swung his gaze on the closet. It was shallow—not more than three feet deep—and empty, except for a single rack of heavy earthenware cups and bowls, about the level of the eyes that probed them. Kynaston frowned at them. They presented a minor problem. Why should the dish rack be so high?

The Service-man, asking himself the question idly, jerked into swift thought. The Chinese had all been small — men and women of little stature. Why — except for some really pressing reason—should they have put the shelf where they would have to stretch on tip-toe to get at the dishes it held?

Could it be because if it were lower, it would be in the way—would interfere with some secret door or sliding panel? Kynaston caught his lower lip between strong, white teeth. The answer seemed obvious. He stepped swiftly into the narrow space.

But his hopes—so bright a moment before—were dashed by his tapping gun-butt. The back wall was only too plainly solid. Nowhere did a hollow sound ring back to him. He started to turn—brushed his hat against something in the ceiling—and looked up to see a light socket.

There was no bulb in it; merely an empty socket and switch. Yet why should a socket have been placed here at all? The bulb out in the room illuminated the confined closet-space perfectly.

Unless—

KYNASTON'S hand flew up. His fingertips circled the base of the socket—twisted the rotary switch—and were violently jerked away. The door had slid quietly to behind him.

The floor was dropping from under his feet!

For fleeting seconds he was buffeted roughly from side to side. Then he regained his balance, fished for the flashlight in his pocket and realized the truth.

He was on an elevator. The floor of the closet was a moving platform, controlled by the switch in the ceiling.

He had thrown the switch and started the car down—down—down into—

With a gentle bump, the platform came to rest; a door before him slid silently open and his flash cut a hole in the darkness outside. He saw a narrow passage; almost a replica of the one in the basement above. Moisture dripped from the concrete walls and seeped through the concrete floor. Thin patches of water-nourished moss decorated the ceiling. As far as the flashlight penetrated down the passage, no door or exit showed.

BLOOD leaped in Kynaston's veins. Down here, somewhere, must lie the secret of Corcoran's body; the secret of Wu-San's disappearance; perhaps the secret of the mysterious flood of gold coinage! Now to get up again with the news of his discovery!

He shifted his gaze and shot the beam of the flashlight upward. Thirty feet above him, at the head of the narrow shaft, he could make out the door and the empty light-socket over it. That switch could do him no good now. Eventually of course, Kane would come from the other room, see the closed closet door and investigate. But in the meantime, there must be some sort of control—a button of some kind—on this end.

He stepped swiftly out into the passage—whirled as a draft struck the back of his neck—and sprang at the closing door.

Too late! The platform, relieved of weight, had ascended again. The door, moving automatically with the action of the car, slipped past his outstretched fingers and closed. He was a prisoner two stories below the street; thirty feet deep in the bowels of Manhattan!

Standing there, leaning against the door, he realized to the full his predicament. The secret he had discovered was still a secret to everyone else. The platform would return to its normal position in the closet floor; the closet-door would open. When Kane returned to the kitchen there would be no intimation of anything wrong. He might think that Kynaston had merely walked out. And, at best, he could only call the Service Bureau for information as to his whereabouts.

At the Bureau they were used to unexplained absences. It would be hours before Henderson would get worried and definitely label Kynaston as "Missing" and—even then—no immediate steps would be likely to be taken. Cursing between his teeth, he started going over the door.

It didn't take very long. The door was a solid sheet of steel, controlled by the same electric power that ran the elevator. Even if a bullet would have pierced it, there was no lock to shoot out. The one way to open it was to cut off the power above!

SENSELESS rage overcame Kynaston. He hurled himself, cursing, at the door, his fingers clawing its smooth surface. Sweat beaded his face and rolled along his body. Hysteria ached in his chest. But, almost at once, the habits of a lifetime of discipline reasserted themselves and Kynaston regained control of his nerves.

It was silly, he told himself, to give way to weakness like this. Was there not a passage here? Who knew what might lie at the other end? Might there not be another exit? He turned and, flashing the light ahead of him, went slowly along the walled-in space.

As he went he was conscious of a throbbing—of a rhythmic beat as of someone keeping time to his steps. He paused, listened intently and heard the throbbing even more plainly. It was impossible to identify it. His heart bounded. Perhaps there were other people here below the ground!

And then the passage right-angled abruptly and, with a choked gasp, he clicked off his torch. Some twenty feet away a dim light was suffusing the darkness!

The light seemed to come from below; from a flight of steps at the end of the concrete corridor. There was still another level, then, below the one on which he stood! On silent feet he padded forward.

AS HE neared the stairs, the rhythmic pounding grew louder. Another noise supplemented it—the chink and clang of beaten metal. Excitement flooded Kynaston's brain. This was the stamping-mill—the illegal mint! Here the mysterious gold coinage was being carried on! Gun in hand, he slid to the head of the stairway.

The light was stronger here, but not sufficient to see very well. Into the room below, he could not see at all. Halfway down, the rough stairway turned to the left, cutting off his vision entirely. How many men there might be below he had no means of knowing. Nor how they might be armed. But he gave the matter scarcely a thought. To Everard Kynaston his duty was plain; he did not hesitate at all.

With his gun in his right hand, he got to his knees. Then, holding the gun extended before him, and at the level of the lowest part of his body, he started crab-walking down on knees and one hand.

Halfway down, near the angle of the stairs, he saw a door set into the masonry at his left. He was just crawling past it when the trip-hammer stopped abruptly below. He froze in his tracks and held his breath. Had he been heard? Were they getting ready to rush him? He braced himself and covered the angle of the stairs with his gun.

And then reassurance came. Into the silence below a man's voice dropped, speaking a slurred English. "Enough! That's our quota for today." Came a laugh and a long-drawn-out yawn. "Nice work you do tonight, Wu-San. How went it with that Corcoran?"

Kynaston, listening intently, stiffened.

WU-SAN! The girl who had escaped from the police! The sister of the commander of the Society of Tai p'ing! Perhaps the man speaking now was her brother, Ogdai, the ring-leader of the murdering crew! Wu-San's laughing reply came floating up to him:

"Oh, that was simple. We met Corcoran at the airport with a car. Not at the exit gate, but on the field itself, as he stepped from the plane. We told him that the coinage plant had just been discovered and that Major Henderson was already waiting for him here. He suspected nothing and followed us readily. Everything went well until he got here and was actually starting down the stairs to the basement.

"Then, for some reason, he suddenly whirled and started back for the street. Ah Li struck him down with a hatchet.

"He fell — tearing out Ah Li's pocket with a dying clutch and scattering several gold pieces that were in it—and we were just starting to pick him up when that fool from the Federal Bureau came along and we had to hide inside. He came down the steps—this Federal—but he went back up almost at once and Charlie Wong and my brother, the Khan Ogdai, who were in the warehouse across the street, kept him busy until we could drag in Corcoran's body.

"We put it on the elevator quickly, brought it down here and dumped it in the old sewer. When the police came, there was nothing."

Kynaston's pulses were drumming under his held breath. Her brother had been in the warehouse! So it was Ogdai, himself, who had escaped through the back door and left the curious footprints in the mud! It was Ogdai who had tried to kill him in Central Park; who had made a mistake and killed Burton instead! He let out his breath slowly and listened again.

WU-SAN'S voice had gone sharp; she seemed to be spitting the syllables. "But that fool, Kynaston, had picked up a gold-piece, after all. He is becoming dangerous in his clumsy way. We shall have to get rid of him!"

The man's answering laugh was strident. "Don't worry about him. He'll be taken good care of. But you did well with this Corcoran. He was a real menace to us. Once in possession of the facts, he might have recognized the process!"

On the stairs above, Kynaston's lips were thin. He'd be taken care of, would he! They'd damn quick see who'd be taken care of! He hefted his gun, edged silently forward — and whirled as a hinge creaked slightly behind him.

At his left the door in the wall stood ajar. Above him a lean Chinese was in mid-air—hatchet poised to strike! Even as he twisted—tried to writhe aside — the flying hatchetman struck him full. The crushing impact hurled him backward — drove the wind from his body—flattened him helplessly, head-down, on the stairs. Gasping for breath, he threw up his gun and pressed the trigger instinctively.

A split second too late! The swinging hatchet made a gleaming arc. The steel bit into Kynaston's skull. In a welter of blood, he went rolling down the stairway!

CHAPTER VI

DYNAMITE DOOM

KYNASTON swayed between darkness and light. Things swam in and out of his consciousness with little regard for reality. Many things—and strange—

There was machinery — men — electrical transformers — and gold. Gold! Boxes and barrels and bags of it! Grinning idols and squatting Buddhas and ornately engraved platters and plates. And rows of gleaming stacks of ten and twenty-dollar coins.

There were men—yellow men with square faces — carrying crates through a steel-grilled gate. There were men carrying small square cardboard boxes and laying them gently outside the grille. There were men knocking down machines with hammers and other men collecting the parts.

There was a woman—a strikingly beautiful woman, dressed in a sheer silk wrap—reading a paper with little chuckles and, between times, issuing sharp orders.

There was rumble and splash in the distance, as of subterranean water flowing.

There was—

Memory welled up in Kynaston's aching head. His vacant-eyed stare focused. He remembered with a shudder that flashing hatchet, started to raise his hand to his head, and discovered that he was bound. His arms were knotted firmly behind him; his head was full of blinding pain. He shut his eyes and swore in cold despair.

He was in the coining-room itself. He'd been on the point of an amazing discovery; on the point of laying cold-blooded murderers by the heels; on the point of making arrests that would save the country's tottering finance. And now—

A voice close by him said: "You are very lucky, Captain. The way you escape death is nothing short of miraculous."

KYNASTON forced his eyes open. The woman, Wu-San, stood above him, fanning herself idly with the paper she had been reading.

She smiled a little and said: "Life dies hard in you, Captain. Defense of it is instinctive with you. You must have been practically unconscious after Li-Fang landed on you from the steps of the door above.

"Yet, with the fading remnants of consciousness, you pulled the trigger of your gun and killed him. The hatchet fell from his dead hand; instead of splitting your skull, as he had intended it should, it merely shaved off some skin and gave you a mild concussion. In a little while you'll be as good as new again."

Kynaston grimaced drily. "To what end, oh Wu-San?" he asked. "I shall never leave here alive, eh?"

The girl started a little at mention of her name. But she recovered quickly. "You heard that from your hiding place on the stairs, of course," she muttered. "But what you suspect is true, I fear. You know much and could guess more. You have become dangerous to us. When we leave, I am afraid we shall have to leave you behind."

The hustle and bustle about him became suddenly clear to Kynaston. "You are moving?" he asked. "Leaving this hole in the ground—for good?"

SHE inclined her head. "Naturally. When one detective"—her red lips curved in a sneer and her ivory shoulders shrugged derisively under the silk—"blunders into our secret headquarters, others may do the same. As you may have observed, we are taking our gold and the more important parts of our machinery to a safer place for a time. The rest—and you—we will be forced to leave behind."

Kynaston, working his wrists quietly behind him, was conscious of a surge of hope. If he were left—not killed, but merely left to starve to death—there was hope that he might be found. Kane would report his disappearance — Henderson would eventually become worried—the police would make a thorough search. He tugged at his bonds, felt them give a little, and said with a mocking smile:

"You must be playing for high stakes, Wu-San — you and that brother of yours. It'll go hard with both of you, I'm afraid, when the police clamp down on your racket."

"The Police!" Again the ripe lips twisted. "Your police—and especially your secret police—are laughable; like snails!"

"Yeah?" Kynaston, intent on the gathering of further information, goaded her on. "They get there, though, girlie. It takes time, maybe, but—"

"Time?" She laughed shrilly. "That's just it, my friend. Time is the one thing you haven't got. News

of the Treasury's difficulties has gotten out. Faith in gold is badly shaken. Your people are in panic. Unless they can be definitely assured within a matter of hours that all is well, you will face nation-wide hysteria. It is the beginning of the end!" She flung the paper open before him. "Look! See for yourself!"

Kynaston saw — with sinking heart. It was an early edition of an afternoon newspaper. Heavily leaded scareheads leaped at him:

COUNTERFEITS IN TREASURY!

MONEY CHIEFS DOUBT
GOLD IN VAULTS

Country in Financial Panic

RIOTING IN WALL STREET

His narrow eyes blazed up at her. "How did that story get out?"

She laughed jeeringly: "Who can tell? I only know that certain sensational papers received anonymous telephone calls. Astounding information was given to them by the caller. They checked up on it. The truth could not be concealed. And they—because you have no efficient government censorship—gave it to the public as front-page news!"

KYNASTON bit his lips. Rioting in Wall Street! The end was not far off, indeed! Even if the papers were promptly muzzled, the damage had been done. He rasped: "What time is it now?"

She hesitated—shrugged: "What harm could it do to tell you? You came here about dawn. After you were struck with the hatchet, you were unconscious for some time—delirious once or twice. You raved and swore; we had to tie you up. Then you slept for a while. It is now half-past two in the afternoon."

Two-thirty! Kynaston groaned mentally. Either Kane had not bothered to report his absence or the Service Bureau had thought nothing of it.

Or—worse still—they had already come, searched the basement above and found nothing!

He twisted at the loosening rope on his wrists; asked casually: "What's your motive in all this, Princess? This plotting—this killing—this counterfeiting; what do you expect to get out of it in the end?"

SHE looked at him for a second, startled. Then she threw back her head and laughed—ringing, derisive laughter. The robe dropped back from her creamy throat; she moved her hand to check it. In the flashing palm Kynaston saw the tattooed blue dove of Tai p'ing. So even the leaders were branded! And then she checked her laughter.

"You are stupid!" she cried, and her slippered foot rapped Kynaston's chest. "You Nordics—yes, the whole white race—is stupid. That is why they are passing. The time has come for the yellow race—the Mongols—to assume their true place as leaders of a new world civilization! Two thousand years ago they ruled. Then for a brief space they allowed the whites supremacy. Now they shall rule again!"

Behind Kynaston's back the ropes were slowly slacking off. "That's a large order," he said. "You'll find the whites pretty strongly entrenched."

"Entrenched!" The ringing laughter came again. "You speak like a typical Nordic—full of vain conceit. Instead of brains, you have vanity; instead of philosophy, you have pride of race. You can think only in terms of arms. What good do those arms do you when, for the most part, you only turn them against each other!"

She snatched up the paper, spread it again and pointed to the headline. "RIOTING IN WALL STREET. That is the only effective way to strike at you. Through your gold—your precious Standard of Value.

"When there is no money—when the workingman cannot be paid—when your people starve because they cannot buy food—then what happens? Riots! Anarchy! Civil War! And when you have exhausted yourselves in a battle for existence, *then* the Mongol hordes shall come into their own and I—I, Wu-San—shall be Empress of the World, sharing the throne with my beloved brother!"

Her shrill voice ceased; her burning, dilated eyes glaring down at Kynaston, contracted. She walked a few steps backward, leaned against the iron grille at the foot of the stairs, and said in a mocking tone: "You are lucky, Captain. Your race is passing, but you will not be alive to see it pass. When the Dove of Tai p'ing flies triumphant, your bones will be moldering down here in peace!"

KYNASTON, repressing a shudder, inclined his head ironically. The ropes on his wrist were loose; his hands were nearly free. "Thanks," he said drily, "for your kind concern about my eternal rest. But have you considered this anarchy you're trying to raise, from all its angles? Won't it kick back and take the legs out from under your own followers as well as the whites?"

She smiled superiorly, moved aside to allow several Chinese carrying the little white boxes to pass—and turned to Kynaston again.

"Not at all," she told him. "The Mongols have never been bitten by the gold-hunger of the whites. Many of our tribes use no money at all, but depend solely on barter. And the Great Middle Empire itself—China, as you call it— has for centuries had, as its Standard of Value, silver.

"There gold is used only for religious purposes in the worship of the celestial goddess, Shan-ti. Now"—she made a quick movement; the iron grille clanged and locked—"I can stay no longer. May your eternal sleep be sound. Farewell!"

She ran swiftly up the stairs and disappeared from sight.

KYNASTON'S first sensation was one of intense relief. True, his situation was none of the best, but his hands were free and he was still alive. With some of the machinery that remained in the place, he might succeed in breaking the lock of the grilled door, and—after that—

He climbed stiffly to his feet and began to explore his surroundings.

The result was not encouraging. The room was large — a veritable cavern hewn from Manhattan's solid rock. In it were all the appurtenances of coinage. Kynaston, who had several times visited the Mint in Washington, was astounded at the resemblance this hidden cave bore to it.

Here were crucibles for melting, dies for stamping automatic hammers for striking coins, an engraving bench to point up faulty pieces. Everything, in short, for minting gold; but nothing to pick up and use for a sledge. All movable parts had been carried away; all that remained was bolted down to the solid rock!

The Service man swore—an oath that was like a prayer—and whirled to survey the expanse again. His eye fastened on a stack of the white cardboard boxes he had seen the Chinaman carrying. He leaped across to them and tore one open.

A glass vial lay in it, carefully stoppered with rubber, and filled with an oily viscuous liquid. The Service man frowned, pulled out the stopper, inserted a finger-end into the liquid and touched it to his tongue. It was nitroglycerine; enough to blow up a city block!

An awful premonition came to Kynaston. The hackles rose on his neck; he leaped to the steel grille at the foot of the stairs and stood peering through it, transfixed by horror.

On the level space below the stairs were more of the white boxes. Beside them—touching them—were two fat, brown cylinders of dynamite, from which insulated wires led up the stairs and out of sight. The place was a loaded mine—set to blow sky-high at a moment's notice!

The sweat stood out on Kynaston's face. He saw the thing in a flash. The Tai p'ings were covering up. Once they were safely out, whether by way of the elevator or by some other exit, an electric plunger would be pressed. The dynamite would explode. The detonation would set off the nitro. Hell would be loose for a square acre. There wouldn't be a thing left alive in the block!

And when?

KYNASTON'S breath came up in a sob. It surely wouldn't be long! Any minute now, the yellow men would get in the clear—and then—

He whirled—raced back into the room — seeking something — some means of escape he had missed before. Nothing presented itself. Deeper into the cavern he plunged; back into the darkness behind the machines. His flying feet struck obstacles; he staggered—threw out his hand to regain his balance—felt nothingness recede before him and pitched, head-first, into the dark!

CHAPTER VII

Ruin In Thirty-third Street

AT THE Eastern Division of the Bureau of Intelligence, the air was charged with tension. Operatives were coming and going. The teletype was hammering ceaselessly. At the switchboard, a head-phoned operator held a direct wire to Washington constantly open. From chief to youngest subordinate, all looked the worse for wear.

Henderson himself, collar and tie long since discarded and looking as though he hadn't slept for a week, toured the office from desk to teletype, trying to be everywhere at once.

Reports were coming—via Washington—from all parts of the country. News there was in plenty and all of it was bad. The New York papers had been muzzled after their first outburst, but that one edition had done the damage.

Banks and brokerage houses were closed, stores and private homes were barricaded. Rioting had spread uptown. Police had been reinforced by hastily summoned state militia, but there was no certainty that they would be able to hold the hysterical mob in check for long.

In every large city in the land, the situation was practically the same. In Philadelphia there had been bloodshed. An armed mob had stormed the Sub-Treasury and the guards had replied with machine-gun fire. In Chicago the mayor and City Council had pledged city credit to enable citizens to get food.

But the pledge—backed by doubtful currency—was useless. When

storekeepers and restaurant owners refused to open, the mob smashed windows and helped themselves.

The Secretary of the Treasury issued statements. Congress passed hastily-drawn resolutions. The President of the United States assumed dictatorial powers. But the one thing that was needed to quell riots and restore order was not forthcoming.

THAT one thing was authoritative reassurance that money was still good—that gold retained its value. And three thousand miles away, the Bank of England closed its doors.

Henderson read it on the teletype and groaned. World-wide financial chaos had started. He turned as the doors opened again, saw Ogden Kane framed in the doorway, and fairly leaped upon him. "Where's Ky?" he shouted. "Kynaston—where is he?"

The Orientalist's jaw dropped. "Kynaston?" he asked. "Why—isn't he here?"

"No!" Henderson dragged him into the private office. "He hasn't been back since he started to see you last night—or rather, early this morning. I called your house repeatedly today—"

Light was glowing in Kane's black eyes. Abruptly, he cut off the Service chief's flow of words. "Get a squad!" he barked. "A squad of ax-men in fast cars! My God, hurry up! I see the whole thing now!"

Whirling up First Avenue with siren screaming, Kane told Henderson the story.

"It made me sore," he mourned. "I sounded every inch of that bedroom and, when I came out, there was no Kynaston. Everything was in perfect order; I hadn't heard a sound or a struggle; I thought he'd just got tired and walked out and forgotten all about me!

"I got sore as blazes. I made up my mind that the next time the bureau wanted my help they'd damned well have to beg for it! I got in the car, furious, and went up to Westchester and spent the morning losing golf balls. When I got back, the butler came rushing out and said you'd been calling since seven o'clock!"

He turned as the flying car leaped out from under the shadow of the El and snapped at the driver's back: "Only Twenty-third? Step on it, brother; step on it!"

Gaillard—big, red-headed ex-dispatch carrier—growled over his shoulder: "We're doin' sixty-seven in afternoon traffic! If you c'n do better, get in here!"

Kane didn't even hear. He was cursing through clenched teeth. "Damn it, if I'd only thought! If I'd only used my head! Corcoran's body—then Wu-San—then Kynaston! He found the secret exit, of course, and went the same way as the other two!"

HENDERSON breathed: "Maybe he found the secret of the gold coinage!"

"Of course he did!" Kane snapped. "And they caught him! That's why he hasn't come back. And we'll find it, too, if we have to chop the place to kindling! If only we aren't too late to save Kynaston!"

The car boomed past Thirty-second, heeled as Gaillard gave it the brake, and careened into Thirty-third on the two near wheels.

Traffic slewed out of their path; pedestrians ducked aside; playing children scattered. Henderson, peering down the block, saw the closed door of the Chinese laundry. He gripped the riot ax by his side. "We'll open it up all right," he

vowed. "We'll take it apart like—"

The sentence was never destined to be finished. To their ears came muffled rumbling like the sound of distant cannon. The paving under them leaped and quivered. Down the block buildings were swaying like trees in a gale. Chimneys cracked and buckled; roofs gave way; mortar and bricks rained in the street—and in the spot where the Chinese laundry had stood, was a chaos of tangled wreckage!

KYNASTON, falling head-first into darkness, flung out his hands to save himself. Rough stone broke his finger nails; jagged projections tore his skin; with a shock that jarred his teeth, he plunged into ice-cold water!

As he whirled and came up, shaking his head to clear it, he sensed rather than saw, the rounded opening before him, into which water sucked and swirled. An abandoned sewer! The sewer into which Corcoran's body had been thrown!

Above him, illuminated faintly by light from the coining room, rock and dirt stretched a sheer eight feet. There was neither foothold nor handhold visible. It was impossible to get back up unaided.

Get back! He caught his breath sharply. What possible good to get back—to return to the death-trap above? He would merely act as human wadding for the monstrous cartridge waiting there!

His only hope lay in the sewer!

At the thought, Kynaston's nerve failed him. There is something about being shut away under the ground that every human dreads. Deep in the subconscious mind lives an awful fear of being buried alive.

In a flash, Kynaston visioned the tunnel blocked by Corcoran's corpse; saw it narrowed by collected debris—too small for his body to pass; imagined the mouth of it guarded by steel gratings, where he would drown or be eaten alive by rats!

He gritted his teeth against the horror, drove his nails deep in his clenched palms—and thought of the imminent blast from above. If it came before he got sufficiently far away, he'd be trapped and crushed anyway! With a gesture of desperation, he drew in his breath and dived headlong into the gulf.

The current, probably fed by some subterranean spring, was swift. It carried him along at express train speed—hurled him against the castiron side of the huge pipe—caught him again on the rebound and propelled him along once more.

Flaked rust tore open his skin; naked bolt-heads battered his flesh; protruding section-joints all but brained him. His mouth was full of water; his eyes were full of salty blood. Half-drowned and scarcely conscious, he was dimly aware of a giant shaking the earth—and realized that, back in the coining room, dynamite had erupted. And then he knew no more.

IN lower Thirty-third Street ruin was absolute. Water poured from broken hydrants. Gas hissed from ruptured mains. Fire broke out in a dozen places. And, over all, rose the anguished screams of the maimed and injured.

Ambulances came in shoals. From Bellevue and Flower; from Beekman and St. Vincent's; from Roosevelt and New York and snooty Polytechnic. Fire trucks sirened up in a sweeping general alarm. Squad cars arrived to keep order. Hundreds of volunteers shucked coats and helped in the rescue work. Half New York hung breathless outside the fire lines—their money troubles

forgotten in the tragedy that had swept their neighbors.

Half way down the block a grimy shirt-torn Henderson emerged from a doorway, gasping for breath. Behind him stumbled Kane—crisp black hair singed by a gas blast, as he had striven to drag an unconscious woman out. Big red-headed Gaillard was dead—crushed by a falling wall. Two other Service men and a half dozen cops were righting the overturned bureau Cadillac.

HENDERSON climbed into it wearily. Kane coaxed the skipping motor to life. They limped past far-flung fire lines and out into First Avenue. Staring straight ahead of him, the thin-lipped Orientalist asked: "Well, what do you think of it now?"

The chief of the Bureau of Intelligence rubbed his smoke-reddened eyes. "I don't know," he said hoarsely. "If Kynaston had only lived—" He shook his head vaguely. "But Ky's gone; that's a cinch. Nothing could 've lived in there. That damned shaft that we saw the opening of is walled up like a tomb!"

Kane said very slowly:

"But if the coining plant was down there—"

"That's just it!" Henderson broke in. "Damn it, if we only had proof that it was! If we could take the whole thing and expose it to the public through the newspapers. If we could say:

" 'This is where the coins were made. This is where the gold we didn't know about was coming from. Now, it's discovered. The coiners are dead. Your money's as good as it ever was.' If we could do that, we'd be all right. The public is shaken by the catastrophe. They're in a peculiarly receptive frame of mind. By tomorrow we'd be on a business-as-usual basis!"

He sighed and rubbed his eyes again. "But we can't. We don't know anything for sure."

Kane, swinging cross-town toward the bureau, snapped: "Well! Why don't you do it, anyway? The chances are it's so. Why don't you issue the statement?"

Henderson shook his head. "No good. Don't dare to take the chance. A few hours later another flood of coins might appear—and then hell *would* blow loose! Mob hysteria would be rampant; there'd be no holding 'em. They wouldn't believe a thing we said!" He lapsed into gloomy reflection.

Kane chewed his mustached lip in silence—started to speak—and fell silent again. They pulled up at the bureau garage, went swiftly aloft in the elevator and passed through the deserted squadroom. Henderson, in the lead, fumbled with keys and opened the door of his private office. On the threshold he paused as if turned to stone—a startled exclamation thick in his throat.

Slumped on the desk—soaked to the skin and laced with blood—Kynaston lay inert!

IT took an hour to bring him to. Another hour to drain the last of the East River out of him, dose him with brandy and bandage him. At the end of that time, pale and shaken, but—thanks to the excellent brandy—almost himself again, he sat up, climbed into clothing for which a messenger had been sent, and told them all about it.

The old sewer, forgotten when low-lying land had been filled in, the level of streets raised and the water front extended, had apparently emptied into the East River. Kynaston didn't remember coming out,

but there a junk boat had picked him up, returned him to vagrant consciousness and set him ashore in Greenpoint.

A taxi had brought him here. He remembered staggering into the office and locking the door behind him. He spread his hands and shrugged: "That's all. Where'd you put that brandy?"

HENDERSON groaned: "And no better off than we were before, as far as actual knowledge goes. They moved the gold and the coinage dies. Wu-San and her brother are in the clear—"

Kane said in a flat voice: "Wu-San is dead."

Kynaston stared at him in surprise. Henderson gasped: "Dead! How—"

The Orientalist's dark face was lined. His thin lips were compressed. It was plain that tragedy had crossed his path. He gestured abruptly with the gray-gloved hand. "She didn't get out in time," he said. "Or else the blast had more far-reaching consequences than they'd figured on. She was the woman I tried to save—unconscious in that gas-filled room. The blast that burned my hair off killed her!"

He paused, looked levelly at the two staring men before him, and went on: "I have a peculiar code of honor. I would do almost anything rather than betray a confidence. But now—I have no choice."

The words, spoken in low, flat tones, dropped like bomb-shells in the room. "I knew Wu-San in China. Met her when I was captured by the Tai p'ings in Hu-Nan province, and fell in love with her. Her brother, Ogdai is my friend. I know where they've been living; where you'll be able to find him. I've often visited at the house.

"I was aware, of course, that they were in this country illegally, but I knew nothing of any criminal intent until Captain Kynaston called on me in the early hours of this morning. Then, of course, I saw the whole thing plainly. But my tongue was tied, to some extent, by Ogdai's hospitality—and by my love for Wu-San."

He shifted his gaze and looked straight at Kynaston. "I told you, however, all that I knew regarding the history of the thing at that time. I tried my best—did all that a man of honor could do—to aid you indirectly; to give you the facts and let you straighten them out for yourself. I did not wish to be personally involved in the ruin of my friends if it could possibly be avoided.

"But now"—he spread his hands—"that hope is ended. Wu-San is dead. Kynaston has returned without definite information. The flood of gold coinage may resume at any moment. In the face of imminent world disintegration I do not feel obliged to keep silent longer. I will tell you where Ogdai—descendant of gentlemen of Virginia, Khan of Mongolia, Chief of the Society of Tai p'ing—may be found!"

Henderson leaned forward open-mouthed. Kynaston rapped a monosyllabic: "Where?" The Orientalist answered simply: "At the home of Wing Toy, the importer—just outside of Tarrytown. I can take you there tonight without arousing suspicion."

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRAP AT WING TOY'S

PREPARATIONS for the coup were quietly made. Twenty picked men under Hopkins, a short, square ex-pugilist, were dispatched in four cars in the early

evening. They were to proceed to Tarrytown, surround the grounds of Wing Toy's estate, and await Kynaston's arrival there. At a given signal from the house, they were to rush it from all sides.

HENDERSON, giving final instructions, barked: "And no foolishness, mind! This thing is too big to gamble with. Impress on the men that they are to enter the house, gun in hand, as soon as Captain Kynaston signals—or at the sound of any unwarranted disturbance whatsoever.

"At the least sign of resistance, shoot! If anybody makes a bolt for it, let 'em have it! We can't risk losing the guy we're after. In case of mistakes, make 'em first and apologize afterward. I'm giving the orders and I'll take all responsibility."

Hopkins snapped a salute and went out into the squad room, where the raiding party awaited him. Henderson turned to Kynaston worriedly. "You're sure you're strong enough to make it, Ky? I could go myself, if—"

Kynaston, strapping a gun in his armpit, stopped him. "I'll make it, all right," he said. "You're needed here. You've got the publicity end to handle. The papers are holding the presses in readiness. The news has got to get to the public as soon as I phone that we've made the arrests. When we can tell 'em positively that we've got the coiner and the Treasury's got the gold, everything'll be okay."

Henderson brightened a little. "Right! And if your hunch about that gold is only straight—"

"It is!" The Service man nodded confidently. "I saw the whole gold supply plainly down in that cave under the Chinese laundry. There's nothing synthetic about it. It's not being manufactured. Nobody's found a secret way to make it. It's honest-to-goodness gold; old Chinese idols, religious plates and images and ancient temple trappings of some sort that have been smuggled in—probably through Mexico.

"They're just being melted up and coined into dollars to throw a scare into the public—exactly the way it's been working out. The Treasury can take the whole lot and melt it over and use it. They'll be better off than they've ever been as soon as we get this thing straightened out."

Odgen Kane blew streamers of cigarette smoke slowly through aquiline nostrils and nodded in quiet agreement. "That could very well be so," he said. "In the back of my brain I've suspected it ever since Captain Kynaston told me how things were going.

"I told you, if you remember, that the Tai p'ings espouse the religion of Shan-ti—and, in ancient times, the trappings and decorations in the temples of Shan-ti were made of beaten gold. There are literally thousands of those age-old temples hidden away all over China. If the Tai p'ings have found even half of them, they've got enough gold to coin millions of dollars."

THE chief of the bureau wiped sweat from his face. "Jeeze, what a break that'd be!" he breathed. "The gold panic smashed—public confidence restored—the Treasury ahead by God knows how much in gold! Why, it'd be enough to crack the depression!" He stopped abruptly; rapped his knuckles on the wooden seat of the chair, and said in a strained voice: "For the love o' God, Ky, don't fall down on this!"

The Service man patted his gun; muttered grimly: "Don't worry,

about that!" He turned to Kane. "Ready? Let's go!"

The ride was a silent one. In order not to arouse any undue suspicion when they arrived at Wing Toy's estate, they were making the trip in Kane's Hispano Suiza roadster. The Orientalist drove, guiding the big car expertly with his one good hand.

THEIR route took them straight up Broadway. At Union Square, police were dispersing a mass meeting. Here and there, groups of lowering citizens were listening to a speaker. On every corner, were National Guardsmen with rifles and fixed bayonets. In the shopping district, heavy police patrols were guarding the shuttered stores.

Times Square was practically in darkness; the only illumination coming from street lights. Everywhere were closed shops and darkened theatres.

Kynaston shook his head at the sight. Would the mission he was now on change all this? Would it bring back the lights to the stores and the smiles to people's faces? He hoped so. There was nothing else he could do.

At Two Hundred and Thirtieth Street, they swung over to Riverdale Avenue—through Yonkers and Hastings at snail's pace—and out into open country, where Kane bore down on the gas.

The huge engine responded most smoothly. The whirling wheels devoured the miles in the wake of the powerful headlights. Towns and villages swept by, giving place to valleys and wooded highlands.

Kynaston, hunched far down in his seat, was staring straight ahead of him into the night and wondering what manner of man the Khan Ogdai, would turn out to be. Clever, surely; resourceful—and dangerous. His hand slid unobtrusively to his shoulder-clip, slipped out the gun and transferred it to his side coat-pocket. If there was action, he would be ready for it. He settled himself to wait.

But not for long. In less time than Kynaston would have believed possible, Kane was bearing down on the brakes. "Here we are," he whispered and swung to the right abruptly.

The headlights flashed on field-stone gate-posts—on open wrought-iron gates—on a winding crushed-gravel drive that arched away across the grounds.

The grounds themselves, though magnificently kept, were apparently not extensive. The carefully trimmed lawn was everywhere dotted with rare trees and unusual shrubbery. The sight brought a satisfied nod from Kynaston. Plenty of cover here for his men! He peered forward toward the house.

In the lights of the car, it was not reassuring. A sprawling two-and-a-half story structure covered with vines and creepers, it looked quite strangely out of place in its setting. Pagoda-like bay windows jutted out from it here and there. There were no lights visible anywhere.

KYNASTON burst out in sudden anxiety: "Hell! You don't suppose the birds 've flown!"

Kane, pulling up at the white-pillared portico, shook his head. "It's always like this. Wing Toy doesn't want to attract attention. Come on." He opened the door and got out.

Kynaston glanced around. Here, under the trees, everything was in darkness. The white pillars of the porch stood out in startling contrast. He was wondering if everything had gone well with Hawkins when, from a row of shrubbery at the left of the house, a white handkerchief blurred in the gloom for a

moment. Evidently the men of the Service were in their places; all was in readiness. With the thrill of the hunter holing his quarry, he turned and followed Kane.

The Orientalist crossed the portico briskly—slapped his hip with a meaningless glance at Kynaston—and raised the heavy knocker. It fell with a hollow "bong" and the door opened almost immediately. A withered Chinese in silken robes looked out. He recognized Kane and bowed low before him. "The Master returns almost at once," he said in excellent English. "Will not his good friend enter and wait?"

Kane gestured assent. Kynaston grunted astonishment at the sight of a butler in flowing silk. They crossed the threshold and, stepping on deeply-piled carpets, entered a huge reception room.

SCATTERED about on the ankle-deep carpet, were a number of small teak-wood tables. About each, little pillows were piled in thick profusion. In gilded cages, suspended by springs from the ceiling, exotic birds twittered and chirped.

Around three sides of the room and slightly lower than the floor, ran a broad conservatory, entirely enclosed by glass. In it were flowers, shrubs, stunted tropical trees and rare growths from the Orient. Over all, was the queer subdued glow that indirect lighting lends.

Kane wandered across to the end of the glass enclosure and, opening a door, entered the conservatory. "Wing Toy is apparently out," he said in a low tone.

"But he's expected back soon, according to what the butler said. Our man, Ogdai, is probably with him. I imagine they've gone to attend some meeting of the Tai p'ing about a new place to start coining operations. If we watch our chance carefully, we ought to be able to grab 'em without much fuss, just as they come in."

From out in the hall, the silk-robed butler slid silently into the room, with a teapot and delicate porcelain cups on a silver tray. Kynaston, nudging Kane in the ribs, hissed: "S-s-s-t!" sharply. The butler's oblique eyes darted toward them swiftly; one rapid glance—then down at the tea things again. Kane began to speak in a pleasant conversational tone, pointing out rarities in the conservatory.

The place was a garden in miniature. Graveled walks led here and there at random. A gleaming ribbon of brook purled through the middle of it. Tiny ornamental bridges spanned the flowing water. Kane, examining some of the horticultural rarities, commented on them after the fashion of an expert. Kynaston, making a pretence of listening, watched the butler arranging the tea things out in the room, proper.

BUT there was little to be learned there. The man's actions were not in the least suspicious. He placed the tray on one of the low tables, lit a spirit lamp under the teapot to keep the already boiling water hot and, arranging the cups conveniently, went out into the hall again.

Kane, glancing sidewise at Kynaston, shrugged. "No need to worry about him," he murmured. "I'm sure he suspects nothing out of the ordinary." He crossed diagonally toward the glass door. "Come on, Captain; let's have some tea."

The Service man, eyes on the outer wall of the conservatory, nodded absently. "I'll be right with you." That wall, facing the lawn and the long porch outside, was windowed with colored glass. Sunlight and air for the plants, came through a skylight overhead. For the purpose of striking color-effects in the conserva-

tory, the arrangement was probably ideal—but for the purpose of signaling to the men outside, it was bad.

Kynaston shrugged. If things had worked out the way they had been planned, there might be no need of signaling. If they didn't, he'd manage anyway. The men would come running at the sound of a shot. He patted the gun in his coat-pocket, turned to follow Kane into the room—and froze in mid stride, his gaze riveted on the ground ahead of him.

Near one of the tiny bridges, close to the glass door, someone had taken a short-cut across the graveled pathway. Footprints were deep in the soft loam-layer. The long narrow prints of a man who carried his weight on the inner sides of his feet. The prints of Ogdai Khan—the man who had tried to kill him twice!

WITH blood crashing through his pulses like thunder, it came to Everard Kynaston that there had been no footprint there a moment ago—that Kane, his co-worker, had just crossed that path on his way to the door—that Kane wore a long narrow shoe.

He caught his breath in a sharp inhalation. Every member of the Society of Tai p'ing bore the brand of the Tattooed Dove in the palm of the left hand—and Kane's left hand was always gloved! With tight lips and widening nostrils, he jerked the gun from his pocket and stepped through the conservatory door.

Kane, reclining at ease, on piled pillows, was watching the flame under the boiling teapot. As Kynaston plunged into the room, he looked up—saw the gun in his hand and started slightly. "What's—"

"Take off that glove, once." The Service man's voice was low and hard. "Let's see that hand that's supposed to be artificial. Go on—take it off."

The Orientalist's dark face mirrored astonishment. "My glove—But, my dear Captain—"

KYNASTON cut him off abruptly. Across the Service man's mind, swift mental pictures were flashing. Minor problems were explaining themselves—the intimate acquaintance with Treasury methods that the Tai p'ing coiners had shown—the almost uncanny fore-knowledge of the supposedly secret plans of the Government—his voice was hoarse with repressed fury.

"Take—off—that—glove! Or—so help me—I'll let you have it!" He gestured with the gun.

Kane shrugged, dropped his eyes and stripped off the glove. A perfectly healthy hand came into view. "Just a little joke, Captain," he said easily. "I'll tell you about it later. Just now, we've got more serious—"

Kynaston grated: "You're damned right we have!" He bent toward Kane swiftly, gripped the bared hand and twisted the wrist over quickly. Tattooed in the palm was the flying dove of the Tai p'ings! Kane cracked an oath and jerked back his hand. "What's the matter with you?" he growled. "You crazy?"

"I *have* been!" The Service man savaged the words. "I've had the facts right under my nose and haven't been able to see 'em. But now, Mr. Ogden Kane—*alias Ogdai* Khan—I see 'em only too plainly! C'mon; get up from there!"

The dark man said quickly: "Listen; if you'll give me a chance, I can show you—"

"I'm gonna show *you!*" Kynaston said grimly. "Show you to those men waiting out on the lawn. They'll be tickled to death to see you! He prodded Kane with the muzzle of the gun. "C'mon, now; get—"

He was suddenly conscious of a cold steel ring boring into the nape of his neck. The butler, padding across the carpet, had come up behind him, unheard. His voice was silky with menace. "Put down that gun," he said softly. "In one second, I shoot!"

FOR an instant, Kynaston hesitated —and that instant was enough. Kane's hand went out, pushed the gun-barrel aside and ripped the gun from his grasp. With a rasping laugh, the Orientalist tossed it back of him on the carpet.

"I don't know how you did it," he said sneeringly. "And I confess I do not greatly care. It is a danger one runs when one matches wits with the police. They can blunder ceaselessly without penalty but their quarry can only blunder once.

"Not that it makes a great deal of difference in your particular case. You were doomed from the moment you entered this house. You were brought here to die—to make sure the job wouldn't be bungled this time! In one way and another, you happen to have found out a little too much to be left in circulation!"

Kynaston stared back at him grimly—read death in the black eyes—and bluffed. "Not here," he said. "You wouldn't dare to shoot. The sound of the gun'd carry out to the lawn and the boys'd be in before the echoes stopped ringing. Where'd you be then?"

Kane smiled in pitying unconcern. His slim strong hand reached out—turned down the spirit lamp under the bubbling water — and continued on to his hip. He drew out a silenced gun and pointed to the tubular Maxim on the barrel. "Like that," he said.

"And the one that Wing Toy—whom you foolishly took for a butler—is holding behind your neck, is just exactly the same. Your execution will be perfectly quiet; I assure you there won't be a sound!"

The Service man's tongue passed over his lips. The situation was desperate, indeed. His own life mattered little; he was but a pawn in a great game. But if the man before him escaped, the course of history might well be changed.

Thinking swiftly, he sparred for time — for some way to signal the men outside. He spoke with derision in his voice.

"You're a nut," he said, "if you think you can get away with this. How long do you think those men out there are going to wait? By and by, they'll get jittery and come crashing in on their own. And even if they don't, they've got strict orders to let no one leave the house unless I'm along to okay it."

KANE was smiling and nodding his head in mocking agreement. "Exactly, my dear Captain," he purred. "Surely you must realize that I know all that. Wasn't I present when the orders were being issued? Didn't I lend my own valuable assistance to the very setting of this trap? And, knowing the entire plan as I do, is it possible that you think I have not taken measures to circumvent it?"

He eased himself slightly forward on the pillows, poured boiling water from the kettle before him into a delicate china cup, and pointing his words with the lightly-held gun, said: "My followers—the flower of the secret Order of Tai p'ing—are speeding here from New York. I expect them at any moment. They will slip up on your faithful blockheads as silently as only Orientals can and slit their throats soundlessly. There will be no living witnesses. Your police will have another mystery. You will be dead;

your men will be dead; Ogden Kane will have vanished. And in his place" —he bowed slightly—"your humble servant, Ogdai Khan, will go on to world conquest!"

The words seemed to intoxicate him. It was as if he already tasted the power of which he spoke. His black eyes blazed; his voice took on sudden harshness: "You have been a stumbling-block, Kynaston. You have been a thorn in my side!

EVERYTHING else, I foresaw; all other contingencies I provided for. I even met Corcoran on the flying-field and had him killed on the off-chance that he might remember some of our conversations on coinage and trace the flood of gold to its source.

"But you have had luck on your side. The infernal luck of the Nordics. Three times, I sent you to your death—and each time you escaped. You blundered into momentous discoveries. You forced us to destroy the coining-chamber that it had taken years of arduous labor to prepare and outfit.

"You were indirectly responsible for the death of my sister—the illustrious Princess Wu-San. But now"—he raised the silenced gun in his hand—"your time has come!"

The Service man's face was white and strained; his eyes were staring, dilated. His slender body rocked; he dropped to his knees beside the little table. "My God, Kane—!" The cry was thick in his throat. His hands went out in mute supplication, seized the teapot by the nozzle and flung its boiling contents straight in the dark man's face!

The Eurasian clawed at his eyes, flung over backwards, stifling a scream. Wing Toy, caught momentarily off guard, hissed an Oriental curse, snapped down his gun and pulled the trigger—just as the Service man whirled from the knees.

The shot was a snap one; the target was moving; Kynaston felt his shoulder break. The impact spun him half-way round—dropped him flat on his face as the second bullet whined over his head. Then his outflung hand clamped down on the Chinaman's ankle—the last of his waning strength went into a mighty heave—and, Wing Toy, clawing vainly at empty air, plunged headfirst through the conservatory-glass.

KYNASTON heard the crash but dimly. His shoulder ached horribly. Through glazing eyes, he saw Kane roll to his knees—saw him grope for the gun he had dropped on the carpet—saw his scalded face contort with hate as he snatched it up and scrambled to his feet.

In the Service man's mind, was a hazy idea that he ought to do something about it—that he shouldn't lie here and wait to be shot—but his strength was completely exhausted. His muscles refused to respond.

The gun-barrel wavered and then steadied; the black muzzle centered on Kynaston's heart.

The Service man wondered if he'd feel the shock. He gritted his teeth against it and tried to close his eyes— Then glass crashed in all directions. The door splintered and ripped from its hinges. From a dozen different points, the straight-shooting guns of the Secret Service poured lead at Ogdai Khan.

The Eurasian killer staggered and threw his hands high in the air. For the space of a breath, he stood so—like some archangel of hell pronouncing an awful benediction. Then his lean body quivered and, soundlessly, he crumpled and fell.

From the ruined doorway, Hopkins came running across the floor. He knelt by Kynaston's side.

"We heard glass smashin' in here," he breathed in quick anxiety. "Sounded like a fight. I figured we better come on. Are you—"

Kynaston, mustering will-power, forced his stiff lips to form words. "Outside!" he gasped. "Quick! Chinks coming—in cars. Tai p'ings —from New York. Get em!"

BUT his audience was gone. Hopkins was already on his feet, barking staccato orders. Service men wheeled in their tracks, making for the doorway. Automatics rattled as fresh clips were slipped in. Someone found the switch and the lights overhead snapped out, leaving the front of the house in darkness.

And not a moment too soon. Out in the road, a hard-pressed brake squealed. Feet rustled in the gravel drive. A bass voice started the time-honored formula: "Lay down your arms and submit to arrest in the name of—"

A bullet whickered spitefully through the bushes. A barrage of heavy automatics answered. A babel of foreign tongues rent the air with screams of pain. And, inside the house, Everard Kynaston, like an old war-horse smelling battle, now crawled to hands and knees with a superhuman effort.

The hall seemed miles away but he made it. On the third attempt, he got the telephone cord between his teeth and the instrument tumbled across his head. He laid his face on it, with his mouth in the transmitter, and said: "Police—to this number— Police—"

He was still saying it when unconsciousness slipped up on velvet feet and claimed him for its own.

Everard Kynaston, Captain of Secret Service, had spent ten days in a hospital bed since the day Ogdai Khan had fallen under the guns of the Service.

Now, at his bedside, stood many men. Andrew Henderson, Chief of the Bureau—the Adjutant of the Chief of Staff—the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States—many others. On the bedspread over Kynaston's chest, was pinned a red-white-and-blue ribbon. Attached to it was a gleaming medal. The Congressional Medal of Honor!

THERE had been ceremonies—congratulations—speeches. The Adjutant was making one now. Kynaston heard phrases vaguely:

"—every member of the Society of Tai p'ing in this country, either arrested or killed in the night battle above Tarrytown—all the illegally coined gold proved good—old temple treasures melted down—Treasury gains tremendous sum—popular confidence entirely restored—all due to you—thanks of your country —Savior of Civilization—"

The mouth-filling phrases rolled on and on. Kynaston wished they'd go away; he was getting sleepy again. At last it was over. The Secretary of the Treasury bent his august person across the pillow. "Your efforts are appreciated in high circles," he murmured. "Washington has been looking you up. If there's anything you might want—"

The Savior of Civilization rolled his head around. Interest gleamed in his sleepy eyes. "Sure," he said. "Tell Henderson to bring over some o' that brandy he had in the office the day I passed out!"

Next Month: MURDER ON HANGMAN'S ISLAND, A Complete Book-Length Novel by G. Wayman Jones. Full of Suspense, Mystery, Action and Eerie Thrills! Don't Miss It!

The Corpse *from* Chicago

Detective Carey Sees Plenty of Action in this Swift-Moving Story of Marijuana Murder

A Complete Novelette

By JAMES H. S. MOYNAHAN

Author of "Blow-Off," "The Phantom Bank Bandit," etc.

THE man had been dead some twenty minutes when Carey reached the Plaza. The precinct detective swung out of the skidding cab, leaped the slushy gutter, and spun the heavy revolving door. He was a lean, weathered man, thick-set in the shoulders, with close-clipped hair in which the gray had made little headway.

A murmuring crowd of men and girls in evening dress surged about a circular seat in the lobby. Carey shouldered through, nodded to the harness bulls.

The body was seated upright, just as the killer's bullet had found him. Carey lifted the sheet. He had to stoop to look into the gray face. At his smothered exclamation Reese, the sandy-complexioned younger patrolman, leaned forward. "What—?"

Carey turned his head. "The 'Angel.' This is going to mean plenty of hell."

"Who is he?" the young cop asked, excited.

Carey straightened, let air out of his lungs. "Angelo Morelli—one big shot in Chi." He frowned. "Funny

I hadn't heard he was in town. I wonder—" He lifted the sheet again.

The dead man was about forty, coarse-featured, well-barbered, with wide nostrils, a cleft chin and a veined bull neck. He wore a soft gray hat, a black dress overcoat and a tan suit. The bullet had gone in over his heart.

Carey replaced the sheet. "Conway seen him yet?"

The two cops shook their heads. The older patrolman, a thick-set, stoutish man, barked at the crowd, "Get back, there!" There was a commotion, and the coroner shoved through, a snuffy, alert, graying little man, breaking way with a long, frayed black leather bag.

He nodded briefly, then, —"Carey." "—do, Doctor Conway,"—and set to work. Carey turned to the gaping faces. "Who saw this? Anybody see this?"

MARCELED blonde heads shook, wide-eyed. A boyish voice here and there said, "No, sir." A wag said, "Don't look at me!" and got a tense, relieved laugh from the crowd.

The older patrolman broke in: "One of the bell-hops first saw the man, I think. He's over on the bench. Name's Dixon."

Carey went over. At sight of him coming one of the bell-hops rose to his feet. A young lad. Carey said:

"You saw this, huh? What's the story?"

The youth said, "Well, this guy is sitting on that round seat in the middle of the lounge. There's a dance in the main ballroom and around ten-thirty couples begin to pour out into the lobby for the intermission. I get a call and go over to the desk and there's such a mob around the circular seat that I have to push through. I'm half-way to the elevators when I hear a broad scream. I turn and see the mob backing away from the seat. The guy's head is down on his chest like you see. I take one look at his chest and that's enough."

Carey broke in: "Notice anybody talking to him before that?"

"Not a soul."

"Didn't hear a shot, huh?"

The youth was positive. "Nope."

Carey went back to the lobby. The snuffy coroner was just leaving. He stopped long enough to clip out terse findings: "Murder, all right. Twenty-two—with a silencer, probably. Powder burns on the coat; must have been short range. Died in a daze, no doubt." He snapped his frayed, black instrument bag and straightened, hat in hand. "Well, good-night."

Carey bade him good-night and went over to the desk. "About that man"—he jerked his head at the corpse—"he staying here?"

A stout clerk with thinning hair looked at him, unconciliatory.

Carey said, "Police Headquarters," and the clerk was all deference. He tongued a finger, flipped pages and reversed the register, shoving it toward Carey with a damp forefinger marking a name.

Carey bent over the book, recognized one of Angelo Morelli's pet aliases. The address given was simply "Chicago." His eyes clouded, he looked over again in the direction of the murdered man. "Let me have his key."

THE clerk turned to the rack behind him. Carey said, "And if there's any mail I'll take it, too."

The clerk passed him the key. "No mail."

Carey went up in an elevator manned by a languid youth who lay back against the wall and whistled.

At the fifth floor he came to, long enough to let Carey out.

The detective nodded to the woman under the light at the floor desk. "Five-fourteen?"

"Down that way," she said, pointing.

Carey found the door—knocked.

No one answered. After a while he inserted the key, turned it and pushed back the door.

There was no one in the room. The bed was made, and a gladstone bag lay open on a stretcher near the dresser.

Carey went in and closed the door after him. He shot a glance into the bathroom, it was empty. He went over to the suitcase and looked through it. Clean shirts, ties, collars, socks. A blue suit. Two quarts of "Golden Wedding." No papers.

HE looked through the bureau. The drawers were empty. In the bathroom he found only a toothbrush, tubes of shaving cream and toothpaste, a straight razor, a shaving brush, and bottles of shaving lotion and mouth wash.

He went over, sat on the bed, picked up the phone and called a number. While Central made the connection he sat there whistling softly, tapping his nails on the glass-topped stand.

He broke off, bent closer to the transmitter. Over the mouthpiece on the black paint was a scrawl in lead pencil. A telephone number. The exchange had been written out, as by someone unfamiliar with the city.

Carey's number was busy. He replaced the receiver, took a turn around the room, tapping his left palm with the back of his right hand. Half-way around the room he paused, sniffed. He went over to the suitcase again, bent over it and sniffed. His eyes narrowed and his lips tightened in a smile.

He was examining the contents of an ash-tray when the telephone rang. He hesitated. The bell rang again.

He went over, lifted the receiver, listened, put his coat sleeve up to his mouth and said, "Hello," in a muffled voice.

On the other end an impatient voice scratched in his ear, "Hello, Angel?"

Carey said through his coat sleeve, "Yeah."

"I'm comin' up," the voice said.

"A' ri'," Carey mumbled. The line clicked.

He strode rapidly across the bathroom, snapped out the light. He tugged at the bureau, moved it across the room and set it at an angle in the far right-hand corner so that the door was visible in the mirror from the bathroom. He put out all but a shaded reading light over the bed, unlatched the door, went into the darkened bathroom and waited.

A knock sounded at the door. He flushed the toilet, called out over the noise of the water, "Come in."

In the mirror he saw the door open slowly, a crack. A heavy-set man with a red, weathered face stepped inside and looked around uncertainly. His right hand went to his armpit.

Carey walked out. "Hello, Arthur."

THE man started. "What the hell—" He dropped his hand. Carey said, "I have to apologize for your friend. He couldn't be here. He's dead."

The man's eyes dilated for an instant, then his face was a mask. Perhaps he believed he had betrayed no surprise.

"Yes, Arthur, he's dead," Carey

said. "Know anything about it?"

The man closed his small, lipless mouth, shook his pudgy head.

Carey said, "Take a whiff of this room."

The heavy-set man shrugged.

"Smell anything?" Carey pressed.

The man's little eyes darted about without resting long in any one place, especially Carey's face. He shook his head.

"I do." Carey's eyes were steel sparks. "That's tea, Arthur. Marijuana. Somebody's been smoking a muggle in this room. He jerked a thumb at the ash-tray on the bedside table. "There's the stick—what's left of it."

THE heavy-set man was watching him in a surly silence.

"One of your customers, Arthur?" Carey said after a while.

The red-faced man looked up. He had a tired look on his face. He said dryly, "I'll be seein' you, Carey."

Carey's lips twitched, tightened under narrowed eyes. "Perhaps you will, Arthur," he said.

The door closed. Carey darted to the phone, jiggled it impatiently and snapped a number. His strong fingers drummed restlessly on the glass table-top.

Police Headquarters answered. He got hold of Lieutenant Horrigan. "Hello, Tom," he said tersely. "Mike. Listen, Tom, I'm over at the Plaza. 'Angel' Morelli's just been knocked off in the lobby here. No trace of the killer. . . . Neither did I; he must have just got in. . . . Tom, there's something big up . . . I went up to his room and looked through his stuff. Nothing there. I poked around some more and I got a whiff—tea. The butt was on the ash-tray. Well, just then the phone rings and who is it but Arthur Dunn. I'm pretty positive he didn't know the Angel had been murdered. I was watching him closely, and he was surprised, all right. Well, I tried to get some kind of a lead—I didn't get the connection—a local dope king calling on a Chicago big shot. I cracked blind about the marijuana, but he called me. He knew I didn't have a thing on him, and I couldn't hold him; he'd be out on a writ in an hour and all I'd get for my trouble would be the berry. Well, I can't tell yet. There was a number written on the phone, but that don't mean it hasn't been there for weeks. Look it up anyway, the exchange sounds like it might be a lead, and find out the address. . . . No. You better send somebody up here; O'Toole will do, in case any calls come in. I think I'll look in on Arthur's joint, the Louisian. If there's anything going on some one of the hopheads and hayburners that make a hangout of that place ought to be able to tip me off."

He hung up and swung his big frame out of the room.

He took the subway downtown and thought about the killing.

Marijuana, Astragalus, Moutar, Tea, Muggles. A few years back almost unknown in the city. Now, thanks to the hegira of hot musicians and hot bands from Chicago, all too common.

THE pungent heavy cigarettes with their peculiar intoxication, were said not to be habit-forming. They gave to the smoker a feeling of ineffable softness, of velvet walls and cushioned floors—a world of eiderdown through which he floated languidly, jarred by the faintest noise, his mind focused like an enormous microscope on the object of his particular attention with a concentration that excluded everything else.

Musicians, when they were on the weed, seemed to themselves to be playing with a brilliance that exceeded all known interpretation. A measure of eighth-notes loomed gigantic, enormous. The player studied each note individually, taking, it seemed, hours to play it, and hearing the tone of his instrument as rapturous, surpassing.

The story that the marijuana weed was not habit-forming was responsible in part for the swiftness with which it was taken up. Dizzy dames in apartment parties were always ready for a new thrill.

Somebody was making a nice little cleanup, and the narcotic squad was running around tearing its hair.

THE Club Louisian, in the hands of Arthur Dunn, the local dope king, had been everything from Chink joint to gyp night club. Just now a Greek manager was doing pretty well by his boss with a local "hot" band and a floor show that got fancy notices from columnists-about-town.

Carey climbed the stairs without holding on to the red plush banister cord. The headwaiter met him with a bow, a white shirt and a handful of menus. Carey said, "Put me near the music."

The headwaiter led the way around tables to the bandstand—a golden shell. Couples were leaning across tables under soft lights—a sleek-haired youth with a washed-out blonde, a sprinkling of fat drummers and ladies to take them, a corn-fed party of four, the men drunk, the women giggling.

Carey was barely seated when the Greek came over. "Good evening. What's it gonna be, Carey?"

Carey shook his head, looked up. "Nothing, thanks, Nick. How's business?"

The Greek shrugged. "This unemployment—" he began.

Carey put up his hands. "Don't start *that,* Nick." He grinned with white, strong teeth. "Arthur got back yet?"

The Greek shook his head. A waiter signaled him and he said: "Excuse me."

Carey looked around. The place was full. The band was blasting. He nodded meaningly to the first alto, indicating a near-by table.

The band finished the set, blew a fanfare sign-off, and the floor cleared. Two or three of the musicians got down off the stand and sat in the nearest booth. The first alto came over, walking slowly. He was a flat-chested lad in a dirty dress shirt. The silk of his lapels was shiny.

"Sit down," Carey said. He waved a hand at a chair.

The man started, though Carey had not spoken loudly. He eyed the chair as if it were a mountain, moved over to it like a man in sleep and sat into it as if it were eiderdown.

Carey was watching him. "On the weed, huh?" he murmured.

The musician's eyes closed. He seemed as one who had just suffered a great bereavement.

Carey leaned over. "Listen, Petey, what's going on?"

THE sallow-faced youth looked up. "Why, nothin'. Why?"

"A guy from the Windy City got smoked out in the Plaza tonight. I found a muggle in his room. I come in here and the whole band's tea'd up tonight. Don't tell me—I can see it in your faces."

The youth put up thin fingers. They played with the saxophone strap hanging from his neck.

"Come on," Carey growled, "spit it out."

The youth revolved his head very slowly and looked furtively at the bandstand. Carey said grimly, "First thing I know—you guys getting muggled up every night—we'll be having another epidemic of stolen cars."

The youth's brows scowled an agonized plea for silence.

Carey grumbled, "All right, talk, then."

The youth leaned over slowly. He said in a dreamy voice, "The price of muggles is dropped 'way down. That's why the boys is all on the weed tonight. There's a gang in town putting out tea cheaper than you can order it from Chi."

THE piano tinkled. The youth sighed, said, "I gotta beat it now, the show's going on." He arose and floated back to the stand, obviously relieved.

Carey sat there. The lights went out and the band eased into a very slow blues. A pretty brunette came out onto the floor into the white spot. She wore a black velvet evening dress, cut low enough and tight enough to show that she was young, had a lovely figure, and not enough modesty to keep warm.

She growled into the hotcha chorus. Carey studied her out of narrowed eyes that held a thoughtful gleam. The girl had a trace of southern accent. Not local. The band was playing their heads off for her. A husky, passionate voice.

She finished with a toss of black, tangled hair; poised, for a moment, arms outstretched; then her red, parted lips broke into a smile of thanks and she scurried off the floor.

She had started up the aisle between the rows of tables when a party of four men entered, cold and breathing hard from the out-of-doors. Three of the men were under twenty-five, carefully dressed. The fourth man was older. He handed the coat girl a blue belted topcoat with a velvet collar, a derby hat, lemon gloves and a black silk muffler.

The headwaiter came up, bowing. Two of the younger men were talking together. A third looked over the crowd, rubbing cold hands. The older man was busy with the headwaiter.

The girl who had been singing stopped short half-way up the aisle and slid into a vacant booth. She sat for a moment frozen, not even turning her head. Then she reached out a slim white hand and snapped off the small pink silk-shaded table light.

The headwaiter led the men to seats near the band. They passed the booth. The girl had her face in her ringed hands, rubbing it as if she were tired. One of the men looked idly over at the darkened booth. He did not stop. The four took steats and the girl slid out unobserved.

THE floor show finished. Carey called over the saxophone player. "Say, Petey, who's the girl?"

"The singer you mean?"

"Yeah. Who is she? Where's she from? What's her racket?"

"Why—name's Lucille De Lyle. New girl. Blew in last week and asked to sing a couple of songs. Nick hired her on the spot. The leader tried to make a play for her, but she don't double, I guess."

Carey's heavy shoulders hunched. "Find out more about her. What her right name is. Where she's from. What she's doing in town. Who are those guys just came in? Ever see them before?"

The youth turned a pallid face. "I wasn't payin' attention." He studied the group. They were lean-

ing forward across the table talking. "They're new in here, I think." He revolved his head slowly back. "I don't remember seein' 'em."

Carey got up, went toward the door, past their table. He did not appear to look at the men. The leader was talking earnestly. He had black frizzy hair, carefully slicked down, smooth, olive skin, a nose that had been mended, and a wide mouth with white, even teeth. The three punks were eating it up.

CAREY went to a phone booth in the hallway, called Headquarters, and got Lieutenant Horrigan. "Tom. Mike. What'd you find out on that phone number I gave you? On Columbus Avenue? Eh? What number again? Oh, the Flemish Arms, yeah. Well, I'm at the Louisian, and the whole band is tea'd up. The price of muggles has taken a big drop and the boys are all on the weed. It looks like a price war. I've a hunch Arthur is mixed up in it but I haven't got the connection yet. Yeah, but wait. There's four new hoods just blew in here and one of 'em looks familiar. Now if the boys have been buying the stuff locally instead of sending to Chi for it, what does that mean to you? A gang war. Right. Yeah, but why would Arther go up to that room if he had put the finger on the guy? He didn't even know about the murder. That's proven by the fact that he came up to the room. Otherwise he'd have known it was somebody else on the phone. The Angel was expecting him, too, he didn't even give his name. Who did the killing? Your guess is as good as mine. Send over a coupla guys to keep an eye on these mugs. I'm going out to take a look at that hotel. Right away."

He hung up, slid back the door and stepped out of the booth.

In ten minutes the two plainclothes men arrived. Carey gave them instructions, went downstairs and flagged a cab.

The Flemish Arms was a broken-down hostlery on Columbus Avenue. Carey walked across the dingy lobby, deserted except for a smoke who lounged on a rickety oak bench below an annunciator. Behind the desk a thin man of about fifty with a bulbous nose was digging at his lower teeth with a toothpick.

Carey nodded, leaned over the desk. "I want to examine the register." He flashed his shield.

The man twisted the book around, pushed it forward. Carey skimmed through the names, running a horny forefinger down the scrawled page.

At a switchboard around the corner of the office a fat blonde was reading a confession mag. Carey went over, lifted his gray felt hat. The blonde put down the mag, smiled. Her fingers lifted one of the phones from her ear, and she looked up, attentive.

Carey picked up the record sheets, "I'll just glance over these, sister."

The blonde looked questioningly at the red-nosed man who nodded confirmation. Carey's eyes scanned the numbers. Nine sheets down he found that two days before the occupant of room 307 had called the Plaza.

HE went over to the register again. Room 307 was assigned to Mr. Louis Di Salva of Chicago.

Carey went back to the phone, gave the blonde a number. In a moment she pulled up a plug and indicated a booth with it. Carey went in Number 3 and talked with Lieutenant Horrigan. "Tom. Mike again. I'm at the Flemish Arms. Look up a guy that calls himself Louis Di Salva. I'll hold the wire."

He swung from foot to foot, knocking heels. The diaphragm scratched again. "Hello. Yeah, that's the guy. Dope, eh? Better have Mooney and Hasbrouk pull in those four at the Louisian for questioning, if they're still there. Try and get the boys on the phone. I'll try another angle and call you. 'By."

Carey took a cab over to Huntington Avenue. Arthur Dunn's activities included the drug store that was a blind for the biggest single bootlegging and dope retail business in the city.

THE clock outside said quarter of one. Carey went inside. The store was empty. He waited around, glancing up at shelves filled with colored bottles, bright packages, and paper-covered nostrums. No one came to wait on him.

He tapped on the glass case. A puzzled look came into his eyes. He lifted the door in the prescription counter and went behind the high shelves of imitation mahogany filled with glass-stoppered bottles bearing on gold rectangles the names of drugs.

The back room was empty. A green tin-shaded bulb threw a cone of white light on the desk littered with papers. Carey hesitated a moment, then took three or four steps toward the desk.

His rubber heel slipped, his foot shot from under him and he clutched wildly at the edge of the desk. He fought for his balance, regained it, let air out of his lungs in a long breath.

He looked down. A dark pool in the shadow of the desk caught stray reflections. A man's shoes, trouser legs, stuck out from beneath the desk.

Carey dug for his flash, sprayed light on the form.

It was Arthur Dunn. Carey recognized the suit.

Carey's eyes widened. He looked up slowly, glanced around the shadowy office. He went slowly out the doorway to the front of the store, his brows lined and furrowed in thought. He picked up the receiver of a pay-station phone, called Headquarters.

He came out of the booth, returned to the office, and went over the floor very carefully with his flash. Near the desk, in a waste basket, a bright card that had held paper matches caught his eye. He lifted it out. The imprint read, "Club Louisian." He could even see the face powder on it, let alone smell it.

A door creaked. He reached his right hand inside his coat front, went to the partition and shot a glance around. It was a cab driver that wanted a pack of cigarettes. Carey took off his hat, made the sale; the man went out. Carey went over to the street door, locked it and dimmed the light by means of the chain hanging suspended from a milky glass globe overhead.

HE went into the phone booth, snapped a number. "Hello! Hello!" He put a big fist over the transmitter and cursed the service. "Hello, Club Louisian? Let me talk to Nick. Never mind if he is. Tell him Carey wants him *in a hurry!*

"Hello, Nick! Do you see Dan Mooney around there anywhere? How long ago? Never mind. Listen, where's that girl that sings for you staying at? I mean the one with the black hair and the southern accent. Yeah, that's the one. All right, I'll hold it, but make it fast. Hemenway Street, what number again? Okay. 'Night, Nick."

He went outside, blew his whistle. A couple of cabs almost collided.

Patrolman Quinn came up puffing, his night stick out.

"John," Carey said, "Arthur Dunn's been blown to pieces inside there. Watch the joint till the morgue bus gets through, will you?" He wheeled.

"Cab!"

The cabbie pulled in to the curbing. Carey gave a Hemenway Street number, got in.

THE cab stopped outside a brick apartment. Carey got out, told the cabbie to wait, went up granite steps, and scanned the list of names under the brass mail boxes.

He rang the janitor's bell. When no answer was forthcoming, he jammed a finger on the button and kept it there. A distant voice squawked angrily, "Hello!"

Carey shot back, "What number is Miss De Lyle's suite?"

"Ain't nobody by that name here."

Carey called back through the mouthpiece, "This is a police officer, come up."

A minute later a sallow-faced man in a gray flannel bath robe and spiky, greasy hair standing up on one side of his head appeared from a door at the end of the hallway, and opened the plate-glass door to the hall. Carey addressed him. "I'm looking for a girl with black hair, sort of a good-looking girl—'round twenty-five. Talks with southern accent—"

"Oh, you mean Mrs. Di Salva."

"That's right. What number?"

The man ran bony fingers through his mop. "She's got the front suite on the third floor. Say, there ain't goin' to be no trouble, is there?"

"I guess not. Got your keys?"

They mounted three flights—there was no elevator. Carey stopped in front of the door. "This it?" The janitor nodded. Carey knocked.

A woman's voice called, "Who's there?"

Carey answered, "Police officer."

A shot from within split the panel. No report, just a ragged hole in the varnished wood.

Carey shoved the dazed janitor back, got out of range behind the corner of the stair just as another bullet raked the banister.

A door at the other end of the corridor opened and a woman looked out, her hair in braids.

"Get back in there; do you want to get killed!" Carey gasped. He brandished his revolver at her. The woman almost fell inside the door.

Carey dug in a pocket, produced his whistle, handed it to the janitor. "Here, go outside on the street and blow that thing until cops come. And don't get lead poisoning from that window."

The man scurried downstairs.

Carey called out, "Come out nice or I'll start blasting!"

A slug split the panel. Splinters flew.

Carey ran down a flight. He found a mop in a broom closet. He got out his flash, unscrewed the bulb until the floor was in darkness. He went up the stairs and reached across the hall with the mop handle at the frosted bulb that illuminated that floor. It smashed with a little pop, leaving the hallway almost completely dark.

CAREY propped his flash on the mop so that its rays shone directly on the splintered door. He stepped back into the surrounding darkness, raised his revolver and put three slugs in the lock.

The door swung back.

The black-haired girl was standing in the light, a small revolver with silencer in her hand. Carey fired at the gun, missed it, and ducked behind the wall. The girl

pumped three shots at the flashlight and smashed it.

Carey rushed the doorway. He heard the trigger click on the empty chamber, dove forward as the girl flung the revolver at his face, and drove her, off balance, back against the wall.

NAILS like knives dug at his cheeks, clawed for his eyes. The girl was like a maniac; she screeched, cursed, dug at his face. Carey, his head down, his arms up, felt her nails dig his cheeks, clutch savagely. He roughed her, shoving her sideways and jamming her right arm up behind her shoulders. In her fury, she would have let him break it.

Footsteps pounded on the stairs. A stocky cop with a thin-lipped mouth ran panting into the room, revolver level. The scared-face janitor peered from behind the stair well.

"For God's sake, Jimmie," Carey gasped, "have you got a set of manacles for this—" he broke off.

Patrolman Jimmie Regan dug out a pair of cuffs. Together the two men manacled the shrieking, blazing-eyed woman. Regan stepped back, looked at her. "She's *plenty* junked up," he said, breathing hard. The girl glared at him. She lay down and began screeching, kicking and biting at the manacles with her small, sharp teeth.

Carey gasped, "Got to leave you with her, Jimmie." He picked up the small revolver the woman had dropped, shoved it into his pocket, picked up his flash, glanced at the bullet riddled reflector and tossed it down again. He took the stairs three at a time.

The cab was waiting, motor idling. He got in. At his direction the cab shot into Massachusetts Avenue, crossed Huntington, kept on over a railroad bridge and slowed left into Columbus Avenue.

A block from the Flemish Arms Carey got out, paid the driver. He kept his eyes on the door of the hotel.

A paper store on the corner displayed the blue bell of a phone sign. He went inside, strode into the green, tin-lined booth, closed the door. His nickel bonged.

"Tom. Mike. Send up the pung and half a dozen tough reserves. I'm at the Flemish Arms. Yeah, it's a pinch, and a tough one. And tell 'em to hurry, for God's sake, Tom. It means lives."

He chafed outside the store, watching the door of the hotel. People looked at him as they passed. He put his hand up to his face. It came away covered with blood. He got out a handkerchief and patted the cuts. They stung, and his eyes watered.

He was blinking his eyes when he saw a cab roll up to the door of the Flemish Arms and five men get out. He shot across the street and took the steps at three leaps before the men could stop him. At the door he stood, blocking entrance.

ONE of the mugs who had got out of the car came muscling up the stone steps. He looked up, saw Carey's bulk in the doorway, hesitated.

Carey said, "No, you don't, Leo."

The other four men came running up. One of them said, "It's Carey."

"Yes, it's Carey," the man in the doorway said, his jaw locked, his lips tight, unrelenting. "Now back!"

A big man with undershot jaw rasped, "We don't back for *nobody* tonight! Those ——— got Arthur We don't—"

Carey dragged his gun. The men on the steps below him hesitated.

The door behind Carey shoved him forward. A shot roared and one of the men on the steps pitched forward on the granite, slipped, and rolled down into the slush of the sidewalk.

Off his balance from the shove, Carey caught a glimpse of the Chicago gunman who had fired, saw him walk forward two steps and sway with a slug in his belly.

The five men in front were seeking shelter behind the cabs in front of the hotel. A terrified driver hunched on the further running-board of his cab.

Lead smacked granite posts, snarled after fugitives, rang on fenders. The men in the street were entrenched now, returning the fire from rods that crashed and flamed.

One of the gangsters pouring out the door saw Carey, rod in hand, and opened fire. Carey blew his brains out. No one noticed.

A man came out the door and flattened himself behind a stone pillar. His automatic barked steadily, spewing lead all around the cabs in front. A man screamed.

CAREY heard a bullet whit over his head and crash the plate glass. A gong sounded up the street. The reserves.

A man came through the lobby, automatic in hand, his even teeth showing in a snarl, his mended nose twisted sideways.

Carey, a savage light in his eyes, went for him through the shattered window.

The man saw him, lifted the automatic. Carey ducked behind a pillar. Bullets chipped plaster, floury dust. Carey felt a stunning blow at his left shoulder. He jerked up his gun, took swift aim, and squeezed the trigger. He saw the man sway forward, topple and slam forward on his face to lie, a limp hulk, on the frayed carpet, red now with the first drops.

And then he saw that there were no more.

CAREY came diffidently into Headquarters. He tried to hide the arm behind the desk. Sergeant Duane was making a notation on the blotter; he looked up at Carey over silver-rimmed spectacles. He was a stout, florid man with flat, silver-gray hair.

"Well, well!" he chortled, "the fair-haired boy—"

Carey slouched the arm further out of sight. Duane saw the sling then.

He held out his arms in burlesque, "My hero!"

Carey fought a grin and growled, "Two sons working and a girl in the convent, and he still acts like a ten-year-old kid—"

"Crowley, O'Toole," Duane called, paying no attention. "He's here!"

"All right, you louse," Carey scowled. "Wait till the next raid. You'll die of thirst before I slip you a drop."

Crowley came out grinning. He was a rangy cop, with bright red hair clipped close. "Where is he?" he chuckled.

Carey grumbled, "You guys—"

They let him go upstairs finally.

Lieutenant Horrigan roared, "Come in!" to Carey's knock. At sight of Carey he sat back. "Oh," he exclaimed, "I thought it was a criminal."

Carey was sidling. He couldn't keep the arm out of sight, but he was trying to make it as inconspicuous as possible. A futile hope. Horrigan saw it.

"How's the shoulder?"

"All right," Carey slurred over it. "How's the dame?"

Horrigan's eyes twinkled. "She's fine, Mike. She was asking for you."

He looked at Carey's cheeks and began to laugh.

"What happened?" Carey pressed. He tried to pass it off on his dignity. "Did she tell all?"

SHE did, then," Horrigan said. He was from Kildare. "I brought her down the bindles this morning, and I thought she'd claw my hands off, she was that eager—"

"Start at the beginning," Carey reminded him. "I missed some of this."

"Well," Horrigan began, tilting the swivel chair back and sitting in the angle, "of course she wouldn't say a word when Jimmy brought her in. We shut right down on her —not a grain. She was pretty well coked up and it held her for a little while, but she got the chatters and cold sweats this morning and began saying she didn't want to live.

"It all boils down to this: She shot the Angel. He used to give her those muggle cigarettes when she worked in his club in Chi. Told her they weren't habit-forming, not like regular dope. She says all the muggles that come out of Chi are saturated with hasheesh first, to bring return business."

Carey swore. "The dirty—!"

"She was only a kid," Horrigan went on. "She had a real voice then, and might have gone far. She found out she was a junkey and she swore she'd kill the man that gave her the habit.

"This Louis Di Salva was hanging around. He was an up-and-coming kind of guy, and she heard rumors he was next in line. I guess she sort of fell for him, maybe because he was the Angel's logical successor.

"Well, Arthur's orders began to drop off here, and the Angel found out he was ordering direct from Mexico, taking the long profit. The Angel came on from Chi with a gang of tough gunmen, including this Di Salva. The girl came, too, but the Angel didn't know about that.

"Di Salva's racket was to bump off the Angel and go back to Chi as mokker himself. I guess he was using the girl for a sucker. He kept her pretty well junked up.

"Well, she waited for the Angel in his room all one evening with a little .22 with a silencer.

"While she was waiting for him to show she smoked those muggles to keep her nerve up. She must have got pretty crazy.

"It seems Arthur and the Angel had come to an agreement. Arthur was to get a bigger cut, and the Angel was to call off the guns. There was more to it besides, but that's the way it worked out.

"Well, the girl came downstairs just as the dance was letting out. She saw the Angel sitting on that circular seat in the lobby and she says she just saw red. She was sane enough to notice that women were crowding past the Angel's knees, and he didn't look up to see their faces. She went over in a corner, put the rod up her left sleeve, then she edged around the seat on the Angel's right, sort of coming up behind him. When she got right on top of him, she leaned her body close so he couldn't see her face without straining his neck to look up. She stuck the rod at his coat and pulled the trigger.

THERE was so much going on—so many people chattering and so on—that nobody noticed the pop cough. She came down to the club and went to work. She hadn't told Di Salva she was working. She could use the money, and he wouldn't have liked it. When he came in she got scared stiff. She sneaked right

out and didn't come back to collect her wages.

"There were five more gunmen back in the room at the Flemish Arms playing cards. They heard of the Angel's murder before their pals in the Louisian. They went right out and got Arthur. Unfortunately for the girl, she stopped in at Arthur's to get a few bindles on her way back to the room. She says she smoked a cigarette and threw that match cover in the basket. It had been in her handbag with a powder compact. The compact came open and that's how the powder got on the matches.

Of course Arthur's gang didn't waste any time either when they heard about the murder. They then went to the Flemish Arms—"

There was a knock. Horrigan sat up, roared, "Come in!"

Reese, the sandy-complexioned younger patrolman that had been at the Plaza, pushed open the door. He rushed over to Carey. "What's this about you getting a month's leave—?"

Horrigan growled. "Damn you, Reese, I was going to surprise him."

Reese looked Carey up and down, grinned. "Lucky dog. A great racket, this hero stuff; how do you do it, Carey?" He turned to Horrigan. "And he gets off with only a scratch—"

"Scratch, hell," Carey growled. "Look at that shoulder. Brand new suit. Only worn two weeks—"

"Murder! Murder!" Came a Voice Over the Wire—

And then the line went dead—its ominous click starting a grim and ghastly drama of ruthless crime and blood-curdling mystery

MURDER ON HANGMAN'S ISLAND

A Complete Book-Length Novel

By G. WAYMAN JONES

Author of "The House of Hooded Death," "Alias Mr. Death," etc.

Packed With Action, Thrills, Chills, and Suspense—Featured in Next Month's THRILLING DETECTIVE, at All Stands

Famous Crimes

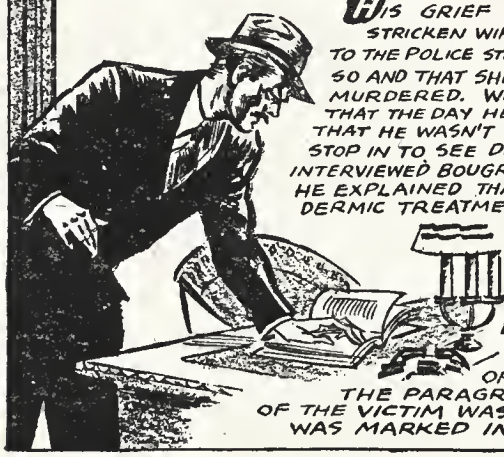
"THE JEKYLL AND HYDE MURDERER —"

ON MARSEILLES, FRANCE, DURING 1927, THERE HAPPENED A SERIES OF BAFFLING MURDERS AND DISAPPEARANCES. IN EVERY CASE THEY WERE WEALTHY PEOPLE WHO DISAPPEARED WITH THEIR VALUABLES OR WERE FOUND DEAD.

A MLLE. BOHANT WAS FOUND DEAD IN HER BED AND THE MONEY AND JEWELS SHE USUALLY KEPT IN HER ROOMS WERE MISSING. POLICE COULD FIND NO MARKS OF VIOLENCE BUT THE MEDICAL EXAMINATION DISCLOSED THAT THE VICTIM HAD BEEN GIVEN A HYPODERMIC INJECTION IN THE ARM WHICH HAD CAUSED INSTANT DEATH.

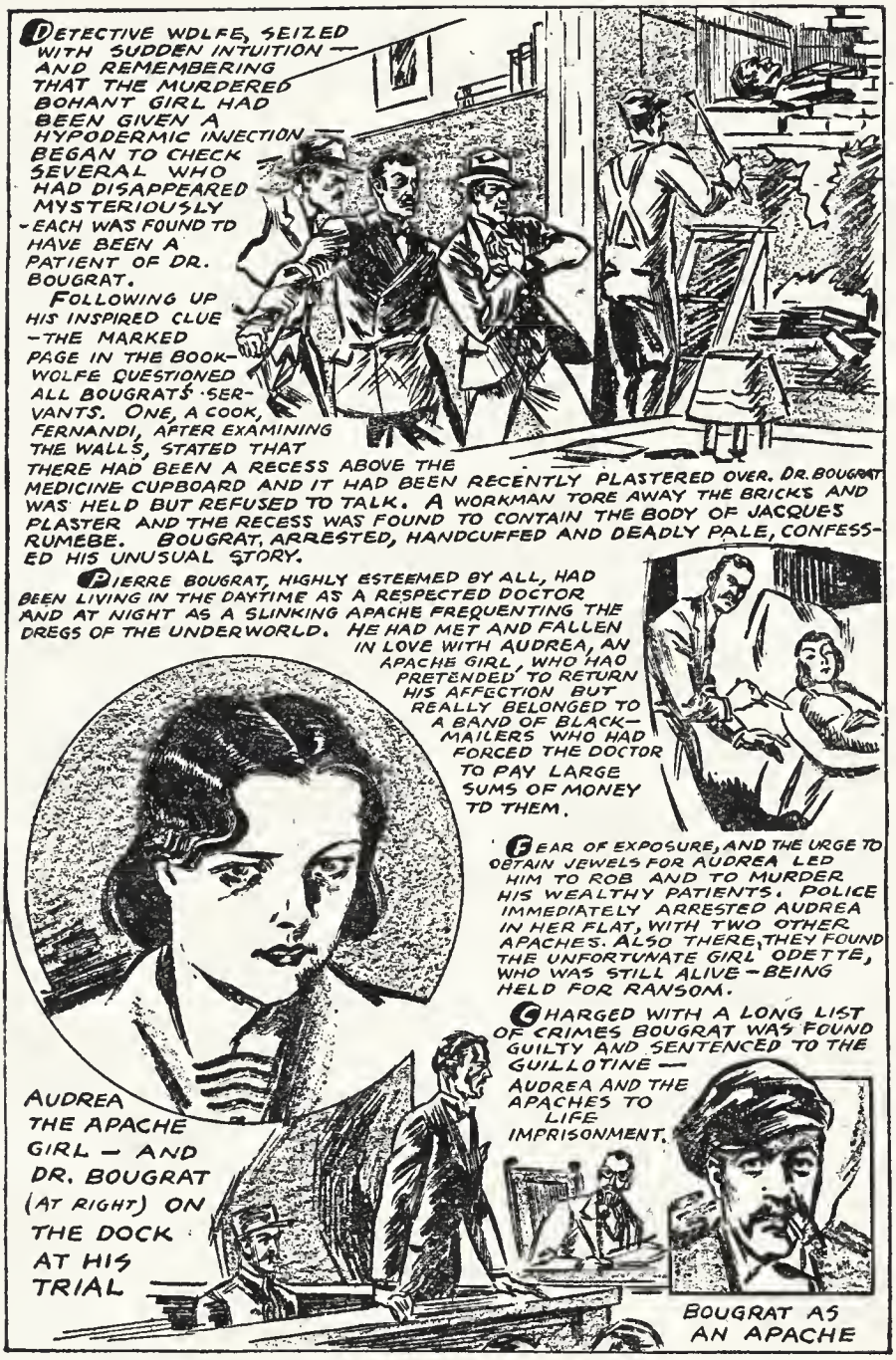
SOON TWO DISAPPEARANCES WERE REPORTED TO THE POLICE. ONE, A WEALTHY GIRL, ODETTE LEPOCAL, AND A JACQUES RUMEBE, PAYMASTER OF A LARGE FACTORY, WHO WAS MISSING WITH HIS WEEKLY PAY-ROLL OF 29,000 FRANCS.

DISAPPEARANCE OF THE TWO CAUSED A TREMENDOUS STIR IN MARSEILLES BUT NO ONE SUSPECTED FOUL PLAY AND IT WAS RUMORED THAT THE PAYMASTER, WHO WAS A MARRIED MAN WITH A FAMILY, HAD BETRAYED HIS TRUST.



HIS GRIEF STRICKEN WIFE, UPON HEARING THIS RUMOR, CAME TO THE POLICE STATION SCREAMING THAT IT WASN'T SO AND THAT SHE BELIEVED RUMEBE HAD BEEN MURDERED. WHEN QUESTIONED SHE REMEMBERED THAT THE DAY HE DISAPPEARED HE HAD MENTIONED THAT HE WASN'T FEELING WELL AND WAS GOING TO STOP IN TO SEE DR. BOUGRAT. TWO DETECTIVES INTERVIEWED BOUGRAT — A WELL TO DO PHYSCIAN. HE EXPLAINED THAT RUMEBE HAD RECEIVED A HYPODERMIC TREATMENT FOR HIS NERVES THAT DAY BUT HAD SOON LEFT FOR HIS OFFICE. NOTHING UNUSUAL WAS FOUND OUT, BUT AS THEY WERE LEAVING DETECTIVE WOLFE HAPPENED TO NOTICE, A BOOK LYING ON THE DOCTOR'S DESK. IT WAS A VOLUME OF EDGAR ALLEN POE'S WRITING AND THE PAGE WAS OPEN AT THE TALE OF "THE BLACK CAT" — AND THE PARAGRAPH RELATING HOW THE BODY OF THE VICTIM WAS WALLED UP IN THE CELLAR WAS MARKED IN PENCIL.

This is the Original Illustrated Crimes Feature—



the First to Appear in Any Detective Magazine

The Giordano Mob

When a Man's Right, He Doesn't Need Guns or Knives, Said Ed King—and Then Set Out to Prove It

---

A "Speed Demon" Story

By BARRY BRANDON

Author of "The Yellow Deaths," "Stacked Cards," etc.

EDWARD KING, now a month with the Blythe Detective Agency—which had grown from nothing to its present imminence largely because of the "speed-demon" activities of this same Edward King, to the end that it was practically a part of the police force, —crouched against the wall, facing the Cestus. He had given the name to the huge, red-jawed police dog which he had captured on his first brush with the enemies of society whose activities brought dough into the Blythe coffers.

King had all but won the dog over and now was training him.

Not believing in guns or knives, but in the power of his two good fists, King did not feel that in training the Cestus to perform against evildoers he was going against his own code. Rules which he applied to himself need not apply to the Cestus. A dog was a dog, and this baby was a tough one. With King's

training the Cestus could snatch a gangster baldheaded.

As the Cestus crept forward on his stomach, growling deep in his throat—a growl of sheer pleasure—the door opened behind King and Greta Haines entered. She was Blythe's secretary, for whom King was making a play. She was a good egg, and worth making a play for.

"Lord," she said, "I hate that pooch!"

The Cestus growled and launched himself, and King caught him about the neck, held him dangling—and still growling.

"He's a baby of a fighter, Hon," said King. "What's up?"

BOSS wants you. It's something about Petersen, who went after the Giordano mob. Boss's kinda worried, I think. He wants you to come right over."

"Okay. Kiss?"

"When I know you better!"

King grinned as he walked toward Blythe's office.

"They're not afraid of guns and knives, Blythe," said Ed King, as the Cestus crouched in one corner while King strode to and fro in the office of the Blythe Detective Agency, hands clasped behind his back. "Guns and knives are the weapons of cowards. They can run from both of them. They can't run from the weapons that God gave men with guts — the fists of guys that know how to use 'em."

"Now, now, Ed; you're all wrought up," said Blythe soothingly. "I know how you feel about sending young Petersen against that new out-of-town mob that just blew in. Maybe I shouldn't have done it, but you were out on a case and he thought he could handle it. He was trained in the Marine Corps as an expert rifle and pistol shot. He knows all the tricks of *jujutsu* and *ta chuen* (Chinese art of *jujutsu*), and he had something else besides, better than all these. He believed in himself so much that I believed in him, too."

"Sending babies against gorillas!" snorted King. "I don't care how much of a man he is. He's new to this racket. He's a good kid, too. Everybody likes him. And he's got guts. Why, when we had the Taylor mob surrounded last week he did work enough for five men. He bore a charmed life. I wouldn't be here myself now if it hadn't been for him. He pushed me out of the way just as a gorilla cracked down on me.

"I love him like a brother. So do a lot of guys in this outfit—and not one would see him go out on this job alone. That Giordano mob is poison. They talk lots and loud, but their brags are backed by guns and knives and a record of past performances to make the blood run cold. Petersen's a kid against such people—"

"Calm yourself, Ed," said Blythe nervously. "When the kid gets back you'll see how foolish you've been to get worried. You're borrowing trouble."

Ed King paused, looked straight at Blythe. Blythe started, for here was a new Ed King—an Ed King with tears in his eyes.

LISTEN, Chief," said Ed softly. "I know that Giordano mob. They were operating in Chicago two years ago when I worked with the coppers there on a case—oh, yeah, I know I didn't tell you that!—in which New York was interested. I worked with Hi Kelly, the squarest dick that ever pounded pavements. They caught him and tortured him. So, you see, Chief, I wanted the Giordano mob myself."

"Isn't that what's really eating you?" asked Blythe shrewdly.

"Partly, yes, but not all. They're the scum of the earth. I'd like nothing better than to stamp them out like a den of rattlesnakes."

Ed King came to pause as from outside sounded the wailing of a claxon. It closely resembled the sound of a police siren and was easily confused with that sound because of the fact that there came also the sound of just such a siren. The two sounds mingled in a paean of discord. One seemed to be jeering, the other to be commanding. There was a sardonic mirth in the noise of the claxon, grim determination in the voice of the siren.

SOME drunk speeding past to prove how brave he is," said Blythe. "The coppers'll get him."

"Dollars to doughnuts," said King softly, his face suddenly as pale as death, his black eyes flashing deep fires, "that it's deeper than that. It has something to do with Petersen."

"That's an obsession with you, Ed," said Blythe.

But at exactly that moment, even as Blythe, noting the paling of the face of Ed King—nicknamed the "Speed Demon"—recalled that a brave man turns pale, a coward turns red in crises, the outer door crashed open and a ghastly apparition stumbled in. The claxon had ceased its wailing and jeering. It had paused for the merest breathing space outside. Then it had gone on.

Ed King's fists came forward as he hurled himself at the apparition —to catch the caricature as it fell. Cestus growled savagely from his corner.

"Petersen!" said King. "Lord, son, what have they done to you?"

It was hard to recognize in the awful figure the trim, immaculate person of Lars Petersen. Things had been done to him. His face was torn and bleeding, as though it had been repeatedly raked by the talons of some huge bird of prey. His clothing was almost torn from his torso, and his chest and stomach had been torn by the same weapon which had gashed his face into a mask of horror. One of his eyes was closed. The other expressed untold horror. His lips, bloodless, strained, writhed back from a bruised mouth from which the teeth were obviously missing.

Greta Haines screamed and raced to the outer office, fearful of fainting.

"Giordano!" said Petersen, toppling forward. "He says this is a warning. He won't be molested, he says. If anybody else bothers him it'll be worse next time. These marks don't matter, Ed—I've got three bullets in me. How I've lived this long—"

He ended it there as Ed King, taut as a bowstring, with hell in his face, lowered the stricken operative to the floor. At the same moment the door swung inward in spite of the protests of the doorman there and the room filled with reporters avid for the latest news.

King did not care for the press. He scarcely noticed the reporters, though all papers were represented, from the screamingest tabloid to the most conservative daily.

HE was staring down at Lars Petersen and his lips were working. He noted that Petersen's revolver was still in its holster, as though he had never had an opportunity to use it. His lips tightened.

"Where are they, kid?" whispered Ed King.

"Everywhere, Ed." Petersen's voice was a whisper, too, but for a different reason. "They're watch-

ing the door right now. They're many as the leaves on the trees. They're going in for everything—kidnaping, dope, smuggling. They'll get you if—"

Petersen paused, gasping for breath. His face was a sweating, blood-streaked mask of agony. His bad eye opened for a moment, filled with misery and warning.

"They'll get you, Ed," he said.

THEN he writhed and twisted, while Blythe and the reporters formed a circle about him and King knelt at his side, holding his sagging head in strong arms.

"No, kid, they won't," said Ed softly. "Don't worry. And whatever they did to you they'll be paid for. Where did they scrag you?"

"A house on West Tenth Street, between Seventh Avenue and the Hudson. I don't remember the exact number, but there were French windows—"

There was a rattling in Petersen's throat. Petersen's head fell back and the kid who had believed in himself so much was dead. Ed King seemed instantly to forget the clay which had just been Lars Petersen. He rose to his feet, ignoring the reporters and turned to Blythe.

"See, Blythe?" he said. "I told you—"

"Yeah, Ed, I know, but what can I do now?" Blythe's face was a sweaty mask of despair. "If you go it probably means another one like this—"

One of the reporters was babbling—

"This means hell'll break loose. You can't kill a dick and get away with it."

All eyes were now turned on Blythe and King. The reporters knew King, knew him as an operative who never used a gun, but whose fists were weapons of offense to strike terror to the heart of the bravest evildoer.

"I'm going after 'em, Blythe." King's voice was a raven croak. "I'm not stopping until I've got Giordano himself. They can't get away with it, see?"

His voice did not rise in hysterical excitement. He was utterly calm, though his face would never be whiter in his coffin. Veteran reporters mopped their foreheads of perspiration and the on kept on babbling:

"Hell'll break loose! You can't kill a dick—even a private one!"

Still Ed King did not seem to hear. He had even forgotten Greta Haines.

He spoke directly to Blythe.

"Well, Blythe?"

"I wouldn't stop you, Ed, but you can't clean out the Giordano mob with nothing but your fists. Bullets and knives travel faster and go deeper."

"Listen," said King after a long pause, lifting his right fist for all to see. "I'm on the side of the law. I represent law and order. I am the people, Blythe. Know what that does to me? It makes me invincible if I believe it. I do believe it. I'll prove it's true. What difference does it make about fists?

THE mere fact that I am in the right arms my fists with—with—with the cestus, Blythe. Ever read Roman history? The cestus was a mailed glove, Blythe. You could kill a man with it if you struck a lusty blow. I am a cestus, Blythe—me and my dog!—and I'm not stopping until—"

The babbling reporter gasped and changed his tune.

"The cestus!" he said. "Lord, what a story! I can see the headlines. 'The Cestus Strikes!' It'll break in streamers—"

"And its breaking may mean the death of Ed King," said Blythe. "Don't break the story yet. It'll warn Giordano that a man is after him, alone—except for a police dog."

"It's a story, Blythe," said the reporter. "And stories are more than lives. It breaks as soon as I can write it."

"You'd kill your own mother for a sensational yarn," said Blythe.

"Let 'em run it," said King, noting the reporters for the first time. "I want Giordano to know I'm after him. Keep somebody on the phone here and at your home. I may need help. I don't think so, but if I do—"

And without a backward glance Ed King turned and departed the office. Reporters raced for telephones. Camera men snapped pictures of the dead Petersen, pictures they would never publish, which would rest in their morgues for years to come.

KING—with Cestus trailing—signaled a taxicab waiting at the curb, half a block down the street. It came up to the curb and stopped with a grinding of gears. The driver swung open the door. King's head was turned aside as he stepped into the car, snapping a curt message to the driver to go down Seventh Avenue to West Tenth Street.

King stepped into the arms, literally, of two men—and Cestus was left behind.

"Hello, King, we meet again," said one of the men, shoving the muzzle of an automatic into the side of the operative. "Remember what we did to Kelly in Chi? It isn't anything to what we'll do to you, rat. Don't you know better than to fight Giordano?"

King's face did not change expression as he looked at the two gorillas on either side of him. His face was white, cold, and as hard as death itself. His lips were a firm, straight line. He glanced at the driver, noted his license number.

But maybe the driver had pulled this with the automatic against the back of his neck. King knew that Cestus trailed.

"You think a lousy gat'll stop me from paying up your den of snakes for Hi Kelly and Petersen? Listen, fellow, nothing will stop me, see? I'm after Giordano."

"How'll you get him with your belly fulla lead? Drive out to Long Island, cabby."

King's lips writhed back from his teeth in a snarling grin. He ignored the automatic thrust into his side. His hands moved with lightning speed, faster than even these two had believed him capable of moving. His hands fastened at the backs of the necks of his captors.

He brought his hands together with all the savage might of the man who is strengthened by firm resolve and the knowledge that he is in the right. The heads of the gorillas came together with an audible crash. They sighed and relaxed. The automatic, unfired, with a relaxing hand on the trigger, fell to the floor of the cab. King ordered the cabby to stop. The cabby said:

"I had to. I've got a wife and kids and they meant business."

"Yeah—I know."

King moved swiftly. He pulled out manacles and fastened the two gunmen together, wrist to wrist. The automatic he thrust into his waist band.

STOP at the first uniformed copper, cabby," said King. Cestus, who had followed, had crawled into the tonneau—growling at the unconscious men.

"Okay!" The cabby's face was a study. "I'd hate to have you lay hands on me, even in fun."

King grunted. "Yeah," he said.

The cab stopped at an intersection. The cabby beckoned to a traffic officer. The uniform came running.

Ed King dumped the manacled, unconscious men out of the tonneau of the cab.

"Here," he said, "is their gun. Maybe the other has a gat, too. Hold 'em and call the wagon. The charge is murder. Tell Blythe I've just started. I'm Ed King."

The copper's eyes widened.

"They're calling an extra already," he said. "All about somebody they call the Cestus."

BUT King was gone and the copper was staring down at the two half-dead killers whose fangs had been pulled.

"Poor devils," he said. "The seat will be hot."

The copper hadn't seen Lars Petersen as he staggered into the agency to die, else he wouldn't have wasted his pity.

Ed King drove on down Seventh Avenue toward West Tenth Street. His face was grim and hard. There was no fear in it. It never occurred to him that he might meet the fate Giordano had meted out to Lars Petersen. He looked back as he heard a claxon. He had recognized it instantly—the same claxon which had heralded the fatal return of Petersen. In that car were the men who had brought the young operative back—and their claxon was wailing a warning to Ed King himself.

His eyes narrowed slightly. He could see it all exactly as it had happened—the long black car bearing the dead Petersen to be dumped out at the very door of agency Headquarters. The acme of defiance of all law and order.

King's fists closed so tightly that the knuckles went dead white. He lifted his fist and blew his breath across the white knuckles.

Yes, the car with the claxon had passed agency headquarters, followed by coppers in a police car with screaming siren. The driver of the black car had not feared even the pursuing police, had dared to pause, with a dying man in the tonneau, to dump that man into the very arms of his comrades.

King ground his teeth.

"And now they're telling me I'll be next," he told himself. "Well, we'll see—eh, Cestus? And I like the cestus idea. I wonder what inspired me to name him that? If *I* only wore one! I'd like to drive their ratty faces right down their cowardly throats with a mailed fist. As it is—"

His cab was drawing up to the intersection of Seventh Avenue with West Tenth Street. King wasn't going to expose the innocent cabby to possible mobsters' bullets. The cabby had already walked close to death—and it wasn't his job. His face was white now, for he guessed the meaning of that blaring claxon. He had looked back to see the black car bearing down.

"I'll scram as soon as you say, boss," said the cabby. "I ain't brave."

I THINK you are, but this isn't your fight, son," said King. "Read about it in the papers an hour from now, or tonight. And listen, son, how do you feel, looking at me? As though you were looking at a man about to die?"

The cabby grinned whitely.

"Naw," he said. "You look as though you came of a long-lived family. And any guy that'll bat out

two gorillas when one of 'em has a gat shoved into his side, ain't—"

"Scram," said King, interrupting. "They're pulling in to the curb behind us. I don't think they'll shoot, but you never can tell. This mob has the brass to do anything."

Ed King stepped from the cab behind Cestus and stood on the curb, apparently oblivious to three men who had quitted the car in the rear and were closing in on him. He was conscious of them, but did not seem to be. His hands were thrust deeply into the side pockets of his coat. His eyes were narrowed, ominous.

HE noted the copper at the intersection, directing traffic. The man might as well be as far away as the moon. Before Ed King could call to him bullets would fly. They'd fly if he called. Ed King grinned wryly inside him. The copper could be on hand to pick up the remains.

The three men stepped up to King, ignoring the growls of Cestus.

One of them spoke out of the side of his mouth. One was behind King, hand in coat pocket, eyes grim, face lowering. He looked what he was, a rat. Ed King noted the faces of all of them without seeming to do so. One of the men spoke.

"Looking for somebody, Op?"

Ed King looked at the speaker. King was teetering back and forth on the balls of his feet, still with his hands in his pockets.

"Yeah," he said, "a house on West Tenth Street with French windows. I want to talk to a fellow named Giordano."

"So? Well, we sort of thought so. Pedro Giordano sent us to meet you. Sort of guard of honor. How'll you go, on your feet, or shall we carry you?"

Ed King grinned and his grin was like a death mask. He snapped the growling Cestus to silence—bade him keep back.

"I'll walk," he said, "and I don't need any bodyguard."

"Ya don't understand, fella," said the speaker, edging closer and pressing something hard and round against Ed King's stomach. "This is a bodyguard ya haveta take whether ya wanta or not."

Ed King was teetering back and forth. His campaign was mapped out.

"And when ya bring yer hands outa ya pockets," said the spokesman, "be sure they don't hold any gats. I'm in better position to shoot than you'll be."

"If you knew me," said Ed King softly, "you'd know I never pack a rod. I don't need one, against yellow-livered rats!"

"No gats? A Sunday school student, huh? Gee, ain't that nice? That makes it softer for us. Let's get going. Jerry, drive down the street, slow. If anybody seems interested in the car, step on it. We'll met ya later at the shack."

The black car moved away, almost without sound.

And Ed King moved, too, also without sound, so fast it was almost impossible to follow his movements. His two hands came out of his pockets. His left hand swept down across his body, deflecting the muzzle of the automatic shoved against his belt. His right fist traveled a savage arc, backed by every bit of strength, every bit of perfect bodily co-ordination, every righteous hatred Edward King had stored up inside him against men like this.

HIS fist landed on the face of the speaker, squarely on the bridge of the nose. His automatic exploded under the nervous fingers of the gorilla. The man behind Ed King fell screaming. His hands

went to his stomach, dropping an automatic that came out with his right hand when he dragged it forth, purely by reflex action, to cover his blasted abdomen.

Cestus leaped forward, growling, to worry the fallen man.

As the man ahead of Ed King took the impact of the most savage blow King had ever delivered, his face became a red smear. His eyes seemed to jump upward in his head. His nose smeared over his face. His lips were broken until the teeth were exposed, white teeth which instantly became red.

It was a little horrible, but Ed King remembered the marks on the face and body of Petersen and did not regret the blow. He would have multiplied it by ten and still have been unsatisfied.

NOW he whirled on the third of the trio.

"See?" he said grimly. "I don't need a gat as long as rats carry 'em. They shoot one another, and I don't pull any triggers I have to regret. How'll you have it, fella? And the pup gets the last bite!"

He saw the copper come running, he blew a shrill blast on the whistle he clutched in his teeth. Crowds of people, oblivious to the chances they might take of stopping wild bullets, were running to the scene of the fight.

The third man started to lift his hands to his face. Wildly he looked about it, knew himself cornered. He dragged at his pocket—and Ed King lashed out at him with both fists. The left went to the man's stomach, so hard that King said later he could feel the man's backbone with his knuckles. "It felt like jelly," he said, "yellow jelly!"

His right described an even briefer arc than it had for the first man, who now rested supine on the sidewalk, utterly out, breathing with difficulty because King's fists had made such a mess of his face. The third man's head seemed to spin on his shoulders as Ed's right connected solidly with his chin. He fell as though he had been kicked by a mule, and his jaw hung open as though he gaped foolishly at something.

Now the crowd surrounded the trio on the sidewalk.

They stared at Ed King—and the crouching, growling Cestus—and someone said:

"The Cestus! This is him!"

Ed didn't explain Cestus was a dog.

The copper came running up.

"Git back outa th' way," he roared. "Give 'em air. Let the law handle it. Who are you, fella?"

King grinned savagely, his grin like the snarl of a wolf.

"Didn't you hear 'em say?" he demanded. "I'm the Cestus! Ain't that a laugh, and don't you read the newspapers?"

The crowd came closer, staring at Ed King and Cestus. King watched his opportunity as curiosity was turned on the three men on the sidewalk. One of them would never move again. The others looked as though they had been through a sausage grinder.

AS soon as attention had been riveted on the dying man, King slipped through the crowd. Plenty of coppers would be on hand soon, and as a matter of course all three mobsters would be taken in hand. Maybe headquarters would recognize the work of Ed King and hold the three for him. It didn't matter anyhow. They were merely tools. He wanted Giordano.

He turned into West Tenth Street. His eyes were fixed on the windows

on either side, searching out French windows. There probably were not many. Any moment and he expected bullets to start flying. Petersen had said that the followers of Giordano were as many as the leaves on the trees.

They would know of the two he had already manacled, of the three back there at the intersection of Seventh Avenue and West Tenth Street. He grinned wryly.

"It'll give Giordano something to think about," he said. "All right, Pedro, start strutting your stuff. Heel, Cestus! Do I have to come right into Giordano's house before he moves?"

HE heard a coughing sound—and something snapped past his face, smacked into a brick wall behind him. He turned and saw the hot lead loosen itself from the hole it had made and drop to the sidewalk.

"Uses a silencer," he decided. "Yeah, and there are the French windows. Three blocks away. That buzzard can shoot. Humph!"

Now Ed King did what seemed a foolhardy thing. He did it without so much as changing expression. He was unhurried, totally unflustered. He started angling across the street toward the house of the French windows, literally daring the unseen marksman to shoot again.

Of course the fellow might have nerves of steel. In that case Ed King took awful chances. But again, Giordano might like to have King alive, to pay him up for the five men who had fallen into the hands of the police because of King.

There was one chance that Giordano might turn thumbs down and have his gunmen drop Ed King in the street with a slug in the heart. But Ed King remembered Petersen.

"I feel as though if a slug went into my belly I'd spit it out and keep on moving. Giordano, you can't drop me until I've paid you up for the kid—and for Hi Kelly, gamest copper I ever worked with. None of your bullets got my name on 'em, fella."

Again he heard the cough and Ed King knew his gunnery and marksmanship. An expert instructor in marksmanship could almost tell the nervous tension a firer labored under, by the sound of his weapon. The bullet sailed past, very close. Ed King looked behind him.

There was no one in range—except the crouching, advancing Cestus—and some playing kids. King's jaws hardened.

"Don't take chances with kids, Giordano," apostrophized King, "or I'm afraid I'll never take you back to the hot seat. These hands of mine itch for you already. Better have your gorilla make sure he doesn't shoot wild!"

But aside from that he had a keen sense of satisfaction as he lifted his eyes to those French windows. The firer was uncertain. That added to his own danger in one way, for the man might shoot to kill in very desperation of fear.

Nonchalantly he stopped in the center of the street and lighted a cigarette. He knew that plenty of eyes were fixed on him. Probably, up there behind those French windows, a machine-gun was following his course. If it cut down on him he hadn't a chance.

HE was tense as a watch spring. At the first hint of a Tommy, he would jump far and wide, and start moving. Just now it pleased him to dawdle because he knew what it did to frazzled nerves. A newsboy hurried past, oblivious to King, shouting, "The Cestus Strikes! Read all about it here!"

Ed King's picture stared from the front page, but the newsboy who carried the papers, though he glanced at King, showed not a flicker of recognition.

"Must be a rotten picture," thought King.

Now he was under the French windows, too close in for a weapon to hit him. One man against many, alone beneath a stronghold filled with men who had dared to defy the police of New York City. They must feel uncertain about it now, though—after one lone operative, in plain clothes to boot, had nailed five of them.

YES, they'd be worried, but Giordano had some guts, and he'd always have a way for a getaway mapped out. There was a basement door. Ed King noticed the bell beside the door. It was so plainly a speakeasy. Ed King shrugged, stepped down and rang the bell.

A pasty face peered at him through the grill.

"Do I have to say that Tony sent me?" grated King. "Or is it all right to say Pedro? Heel, Cestus!"

"Smart, ain't ya, dick? Come on in. We been expectin' ya!"

"I thought so. Where's Giordano?"

"You'll be seein' him soon enough."

"Think he's got guts enough to look at me while I'm alive and still on my feet?"

King's taunt was deliberate. He knew his questioning of the courage of Giordano would reach the mob leader in a matter of seconds. If Giordano avoided King then his own men would question his courage. So Ed King figured the psychology of the gangster.

The grilled door swung back and Ed entered, followed by Cestus. His lips were puckered in a soundless whistle. He believed that the best defense, always, was a brazen offense. Only a fool would tackle a mob like this singlehanded, without other weapons than his own fists.

He wasn't a fool, but the mob would think so—or else fear that he was sure of himself because he knew himself unbeatable. Either way he held a slight advantage.

"I guess Giordano ain't scared much," said Pasty Face. He lifted his voice for the benefit of half a dozen men before a bar behind which a bartender dished out amber liquid in small glasses. "This buzzard wonders if Giordano isn't afraid."

The men whirled, laughing raucously. But Ed King detected the nervousnes in their laughter. He knew they'd never allow him to leave this place alive if they could help it. If he whirled for the door now a dozen bullets would whip his back to a bloody froth. As long as he stayed they would lay off him, trying to figure him out.

He might, they would figure, be backed by a hundred coppers stationed around the place. As things now stood there was nothing against any of them that could be speedily proved—and Giordano had good mouthpieces to spring himself or his men in case of a pinch.

AFRAID?" said a big six-footer, whose face was covered with a stubble of beard. He had a cauliflowered ear and a dead face. His eyes were little and beady. "Afraid, copper? Why should he be afraid, when he's got guys like me around, that could wrap you around their little fingers?"

King walked up to the speaker. Cestus squatted, his jaws slavering.

"So," said King softly, "you don't see any cauliflower ears on me, do you?"

The others laughed, started to

form a circle about Ed King and the patently ex-fighter. The man reddened, spat on the floor at King's feet.

His own feet started setting themselves in the boxer's conventional stance of defense.

"Oh, don't bother with all the motions!" snapped King.

His right fist traveled outward as he spoke. It started as his words started. When he had finished the last word the man of the cauliflower ear sagged to the floor, his jaw hanging down. Ed King had landed full and true to the button.

"Anybody else?" he said softly. "No? That let's my pooch out. Who's going to take me to Giordano?"

FROM somewhere at the head of a flight of stairs he had noted on entering came a rasping voice.

"Bring the dick up, you mugs! I'm waiting to chew his ears off an' spit 'em in his face!"

Ed King grinned. Cestus growled. King pushed the fallen man aside with the toe of his shoe.

"Hear the master?" he demanded. "Let's get going. And don't lock the door. Come, Cestus! Giordano and I'll be going out in a few minutes."

There had been nervous bravado in the voice of Giordano. His men laughed. Ed King felt their nervousness. They didn't know what to think of a man who would stick his head into a lion's mouth. They followed him upstairs.

One of them opened a door for him, with a sweeping, mocking bow. Ed King's eyes locked with the fellow's, and the gorilla reddened. Cestus slipped past, hackles lifted.

Giordano, whose pictures Ed King had often seen, stood across the room, waiting. He was just under six feet in height, weighed near two hundred, looked like a collar ad. His clothing was immaculate.

He grinned at Ed King.

"Well, Cestus?" he said. "Now what?"

"I've come for you, Pedro," said King. "I'm taking you in for the murder of Lars Petersen. When the public hears how you tortured him they'll lynch you."

"They'll never hear—from you," said Giordano.

"No? I'd hate to have Cestus muss your fine clothes, Giordano."

Giordano laughed. Then his face went grim. A scar across one cheek flamed redly.

"Fools!" he said to his men. "How does it happen he still is free? He should have been bound—and the dog shot!"

The gorillas shifted uneasily.

"They didn't have the guts, Pedro," said Ed King. "Nor have you!"

"Smack him down!" snapped Giordano. "We'll see how he behaves with knife blades working on him."

Ed King leaped aside as the men closed on him. One of them was lifting a weapon high to bring it down on his head. Ed King dived in, grabbed the gun hand, shoved his right arm under the elbow, then over the arm to grasp the wrist, jerked. The gun dropped as the man squealed with pain.

"Get him, Cestus!" snapped King.

HE knelt swiftly and grabbed up the gat. The dog moved like a streak of light.

"Look out!" yelled Giordano. But King didn't fire. Almost from a kneeling position he hurled the automatic. His aim was true. The gat crashed to the temple of Giordano, who fell like a log—and Cestus moved.

"Lord," said one of the gorillas, "Giordano will have our hides for

this! We've gotta have this rooster solid when he comes around. Scrag the dog. Drag Giordano into his room."

King jumped for the door, slammed it, put his back against it.

"I'm taking Giordano out with me," he said grimly. "Try to stop me!"

THEY charged. King became a pinwheel of action. There were six men. They hampered one another's movements. And they dared not shoot. Giordano wanted him alive.

King's left fist crashed against a man's chin. His fist had the back of the hand uppermost and he struck downward. That blow would break a man's neck, if he hit hard enough. But he knew how hard to hit. The fellow sagged. King struck him again, but in the act of striking he spun on his left heel and drove the blow to another man's face. He drove it home hard, with all his power.

A sob of joy rose in his throat as he felt bone and muscle give under the savage drive of his blow. Two men were down. In the end the gorillas might decide to shoot, but he wouldn't stand still long enough. While he had stood against the door he had locked it. Now there was hammering against it outside. One of the four men jumped to open it.

Ed King jumped with him, smashing him on the bump behind his right ear. The man went limp in midair and melted to the floor. That left three. If they were not trained fighters, Ed King could lick any average three men in rough-and-tumble.

Now they jumped in. One rode his back. King jumped, curved his back until he was a ball in midair, and turned over. His hands grabbed the wrists of the man on his back, to keep him from escaping. The two landed hard, with the mobster on the bottom, taking the full force of King's fall.

Cestus growled and stood guard over the fallen man.

Two more were left, for the fourth man had struck on the back of his head. Now King extended himself, concentrating on keeping the last two ahead of him. They fought savagely. One drew an automatic which instantly spun across the room to smash against the body of Giordano when King's foot came up like a shot to kick it away. The faces of the last two were crimson masks of terror—their staring eyes on Cestus.

"A little payment for Petersen!" King gasped. "But even after I've fixed your faces to suit me, they'll still look like certain pictures in the Gallery. Don't you roosters know that Giordano isn't all-powerful? You'll burn! You should have shot us down when we came in."

They were panting. Their faces were masks of fear. They clawed with their finger nails, desperate men who seemed to be fighting against a current or an avalanche. They fought with the courage of desperation.

Ed King cut them to pieces with hard knuckles, always remembering Petersen and Hi Kelly—and his slogan that fists were better than guns against cowards.

OUTSIDE he heard the raucous bleating of the newsboys:

"The Cestus Strikes! Who is the Cestus?"

"Hear that?" said King. "You'll read what it all means when they take newspapers to you in the Tombs! And Cestus is a dog. How do you like him?"

One man staggered. Ed King pressed his advantage, whipping

over a savage right at last that almost knocked a man's head from his shoulders.

Even with a cestus, a real one, the average man could not have dealt so bitter a blow. Now one man—remained—and this one Cestus pulled down as King stepped back and barked a command.

Then he knelt over Giordano, rolled him to his back in the fireman's lift—caught up the automatic which had knocked out the leader, and started for the door. He unlocked it, kicked it open.

CESTUS went through. King held an automatic in his right hand. He did not think of the implied threat, nor that its muzzle pointed at the pomaded hair of Giordano. He was merely taking the weapon as evidence. The bullets that had killed Petersen might fit it. That the gat pointed at Giordano was a mere accident of King's manner of carrying the unconscious man. And there was Cestus.

"Out of my way, fools!" snarled King. "There's nothing left for you to do but get Giordano's mouthpiece. But I'm telling you, nothing will save him from the chair. And you mugs better learn something—that when a guy's right he don't need guns or knives; that all he needs is his own guts and two good hands—and maybe a dog that's mostly wolf—and a woman to go home to! Make way, rats!"

But, desperate at the plight of their leader, and realizing what it meant to all of them if he were taken in, they did not make way. They charged—and King spoke to Cestus:

"Get 'em, Cestus!"

AS King lowered Giordano to the floor there sounded from outside the keening of police sirens as hurry-up wagons filled with coppers got on the job. King needed only to hold his prisoners until they came. He stood astride Giordano and fought out savagely at Giordano's rats. His knuckles began to bleed because the skin was broken by the savagery of his blows.

The Cestus, growling, in his element now because his master allowed him full rein—ripped at this gangster and that, his fangs slashing through clothing, through bone and skin and muscle. Three of the gangsters were a bloody mess when the coppers broke in, whistling their importance.

Cestus had a mouthful of clothing—and the cloth was crimson, as red as the savage eyes of the dog. It was a clean sweep of Giordano's mob—and King motioned a burly copper back who would have grabbed onto Giordano.

"He's mine, fella," said King. "I aim to see him burn—me and Cestus, maybe. But here's a job for you, copper: see that Giordano's mob gets the next newspapers when they become conscious in the can—and they can read that when Cestus and yours truly say 'Make way, rats!' we don't mean peradventure!"

Don't Miss THE GREEN BOTTLE, Another Exciting "Speed Demon" Story by Barry Brandon in Next Month's THRILLING DETECTIVE

PICTURE FRAME

Riddel's Camera Was All Rigged Up to Catch a Murderer in the Act—and Strange Things Happened

By H. M. APPEL

Author of "Some Little Danger," etc.

I CAN catch your thief for you, or at least identify him!" Henry Riddel beamed at his four companions in the clapboard shack, his extraordinarily long narrow face twisted in an expression of cunning.

An east wind howled in the willows above the cabin and the stove's potbelly glowed red with the heat of a driftwood fire. A crash of Lake Michigan breakers on the neighboring beach made each speaker instinctively raise his voice above the roar. Hymie Weiss, local bootlegger and his own best customer, raised his complaint in tones but slightly blurred.

"Catch him for me, please do! Jus' give me a crack at him! No sooner do we form this Lakeside Gun Club and build a shack than sneak thieves start pestering us. A whole case of shells this time—"

"Nothing to it," Riddel boasted.

He unfolded his lank six feet from a camp chair and picked up a camera in a leather case. "See this? I'll hide it somewhere when we leave—all cocked and loaded as you fellows would say—with a string to the door to trip the shutter so the thief will take his own photograph and never know it. How's that?"

Sergeant Hauss, a short red faced officer of the town police, said admiringly, "I think we need you on the detective detail!"

HENRY RIDDEL flushed with pride. He pushed his long straw-colored hair out of close-set eyes and pursed his mobile lips modestly. Riddel was a photographic nut. He had seldom fired a gun in his life but joined the shotgun enthusiasts because they had leased some land among the sand dunes which was a favorite haunt.

In this isolated section one could photograph storm scenes of sternest grandeur. To avoid being called a trespasser, he had paid the small initiation fee and found the shack a comfortable resting place these chilly fall days.

A strapping young fellow, Burton Boyd, reclined in a canvas deck chair. He opened one sleepy eye and said disdainfully:

"If I met a stranger in far off Patagonia and he told me of someone pulling a trick like that, I'd know you did it, Riddel! You're the shiftiest bird ever hatched in these parts."

With an air of offended dignity the photographer inquired:

"What's wrong with my plan? It'll work!"

"Sure," drawled Boyd. "Like a lot of other shady stunts you've pulled. Be a man once! Hide *yourself* in the bushes if you want to catch the poor guy—and shoot the pants off him! Don't be such a damned sneak."

The two had gone to school together. From early boyhood Boyd had despised the devious means by which Riddel made his way in life and being of a blunt nature, with the barb of sarcasm on his tongue, never did he miss an opportunity to express his opinion of the man.

Riddel exclaimed angrily: "I won't take such talk from anybody. You've no right to say such things. A sneak, am I? I'll—"

Weiss, when he imbibed too freely, became bellicose in defense of his friends. Stepping up to Riddel he demanded, "You'll what? G'wan! Tell me! Boyd's right. It'd be a dirty trick to play on a man."

He placed his powerful hand on Riddel's chest and gave a shove. The photographer staggered back, tripped, and for a fraction of a second sat down on the glowing stove. Springing up with a yell of pain he doubled his bony fists and glared. But he made no move to attack his tormentors, being by nature a coward.

SERGEANT HAUSS stepped between them, expostulating, "For cripe's sake cut out the horse play. You act like a couple of kids. Boyd, you're always starting something like this." He looked from one to the other angrily. "If we're going to do any shooting, come on! Weiss, you'd better just watch us. No telling where you'd point a gun today."

"Aw!" The dealer in irrigation problems was penitent. "I was jus' fooling. I'm all ri'. Give me my hat." Opening the door he shouted to a boy waiting in the lee of the trap house, telling him to get set.

They trouped out, all save Riddel, who stood at a side window glowering. He watched them take positions at the shooting stand a few yards away. The trap was located beyond the opposite side of the shack, because of prevailing winds, so that firing was done straight past the front

door. He drew back from the window for fear the inebriated Weiss might send a wild shot in that direction.

Standing beside the stove he cursed softly, monotonously, consigning Boyd to every form of hellfire. A banker's son, with plenty of time and money to spend in pursuit of pleasure, his enemy led the sort of life he envied.

Riddel could only afford to follow his hobby on off days when business permitted. That "business" was of an uncertain nature and had caused occasional complaint from persons who declared themselves defrauded in questionable prize contests, the purchase of lottery tickets, and other speculations of that variety.

He devoted a just share of his profanity to Hymie Weiss, although blaming him less than Boyd, for he knew the man was good-natured, save when drunk.

As he brooded over his mistreatment long smouldering hatred of Burton Boyd flared in his heart until he saw hazy visions of killing the man. He thought it would be a pleasure to shoot him with one of the silly guns they prized so highly.

But down underneath his anger lay the thought that he really hadn't the nerve to kill anyone—not so long as there was danger of punishment—for he feared the Law as much as physical harm.

Putting his black ideas aside with the vagrant wish that a drunken fool like Weiss might accidentally loose a charge of shot in Boyd's direction, Riddel stepped out the door during a lull in their firing.

DODGING around behind the cabin he circled by a safe course past the shooting stand, across to the opposite side of the range. He carried his camera with him. It would be fun to catch the thief by means of his absorbing hobby.

Searching for a vantage point in which to hide the instrument, he found a spot that suited him, across from the cabin door. Edging his way forward into the clump of bushes, with some trepidation because it was dangerously near the line of fire, he came upon a log half buried in the sand.

It made a perfect base for his spike-point tripod.

While Riddel busied himself with his trap, Sergeant Hauss went to the shack for a fresh box of shells. The photographer looked up in time to see Boyd pointing to the clump of bushes in which he was almost concealed.

WEISS, perhaps at the other's suggestion, raised his gun—grinned over the shining barrel—sent a charge of birdshot whistling through the outer fringe of brush. A few stray pellets buried themselves in Riddel's thigh. He shrieked with pain and fright, falling to the ground.

Sobered, both Weiss and Boyd ran toward him. The sergeant lumbered out of the shack. They came up, white of face and panting, evidently believing him half killed.

Riddel groaned, "He shot me! I think that damned Boyd put him up to it! Hauss, I want them both arrested for intent to kill or something!"

The sergeant scowled at the guilty pair and proceeded partially to disrobe the photographer. A glance at the few small punctures reassured him and he grunted:

"You'll be all right. Doc Haney will dig 'em out, or you can leave 'em in. They won't do any harm. But you two fools"—he glared at Boyd and Weiss—"ought to be cooped up. You're a public menace. Any more bonehead stunts like this and the gun club's a flop. Let's finish this round and go to town."

Boyd could not resist a taunt. "Hymie just sent a sprinkle of shot past the bushes to see him jump. He didn't mean any harm. If it'd been me, I'd have planted a few No. 7's right where Henry got burned on the stove. No use spoiling two pieces of his hide."

The sergeant refused to laugh and they strode back to the shooting stand, Weiss saying he would not shoot out his string.

Riddel announced angrily, "I'm staying right here on this log. And if anyone shoots me again he'd better do a good job. I'll haul you all into court."

As they banged away at the last round of clay birds, Riddel nursed his wrongs. While waiting for them to finish, he made minute adjustments of the camera on its tripod, sighting through the ground glass several times. When the others started back to the shelter of the cabin he covered his photographic thief detector with a waterproof cloth and joined them.

The men were just putting away their guns in a cleverly contrived secret cubbyhole. Weiss remarked: "I hope you get a picture of that devil, Henry. Next thing we know he'll be stealing these."

Sergeant Hauss said, "You walked down the beach didn't you, Riddel? Better ride back with me. That leg may get sore."

The other two departed, Weiss expressing regret for his folly.

Riddel dug out of his kit a spool of heavy thread and ran a line of it from the locked door of the shack to the shutter of his camera, spreading a light covering of sand over the thread to hold it in place in the heavy wind and conceal it from passers-by.

The sergeant, watching with interest, inquired, "Sure you got it loaded full of film and all that?"

"Film!" snorted Riddel contemptuously. "A real artist always uses plates. Yes, it's all set for the job it has to do." He added thoughtfully, "This is Wednesday. I won't be able to pick up the box till Saturday. Got to run in to Chicago on business. Guess I can risk leaving it here three days. I'll stop by for you when I return and we'll come out together."

It was Friday afternoon, however, when he walked into the police station, saying:

"Just got off the train. Finished my business a day early. How about driving me out to the shack to get my camera?" Half apologetically he added, "It cost a lot of dough. Don't like leaving it there too long."

Sergeant Hauss was willing. They got into his car and soon were bouncing over the rutted trail which wound through the dunes to the cabin. The ruts ended at the rear of the building. They got out and when they walked round the corner both halted, staring in wide-eyed alarm.

"For God's sake!" gasped Hauss. "It's a man—it's Hymie Weiss! He's dead!"

THERE could be no doubt about it. The body lay sprawled against the cabin door which hung partly open. The legs were curled up as if in pain and the whole side of the dead man's face was a mass of blood, still red and moist.

The sergeant hurried to the corpse and upon examination exclaimed: "Killed with a shotgun—at close range! He's only been dead a short while. Good heavens, Riddel, it's murder!"

The photographer, face white and hands trembling at his sides, said: "I wonder what brought him out here on Friday? Did he say anything about coming?"

"No. It's queer. Poor old Hymie."

Weiss, despite his illegal business —which was not seriously frowned upon in a State that had voted wet —had been an honest soul whom almost everybody liked. Anger surged in the sergeant's face.

"The dirty, cowardly killer! Shooting down an unarmed man." He paused, speculating, "Hymie might have had a gun on him though. Maybe he was meeting somebody. This might be the work of Chicago hoodlums."

He knelt down and felt over the dead man's clothing. On second thought he searched more thoroughly, looking for anything that might give a clue to the mystery. In the first pocket he came upon a scrawled note at the words of which his red face blanched. Leaping erect, he cried:

"Look at this! This may be twice as bad as we thought."

HENRY RIDDEL gaped. "Wh-what is it?"

Sergeant Hauss thrust the note at him without a word, features screwed up in an expression of bewilderment.

Riddel read:

"Meet me at the gun club shack at 1:00 p.m. Got an undercover deal on with a fellow and want you to look him over. Don't say anything or 'phone. We'll be waiting inside.

Burton Boyd."

"Why—why—" Riddel was momentarily at a loss for words. Then he suggested cannily, "You don't think this other fellow Boyd mentions—maybe somebody from a Chicago gang like you said—killed Weiss?"

The sergeant considered. Suddenly he jumped as though stung. "Boyd! Maybe he's dead, too." They ran into the shack but found nothing there. The officer beat his fists together impatiently. "Ought to have a telephone out here. We'll have to get back to town and see if Boyd is missing—say!" He looked at the open door. "Your camera! The string must be broken!"

"Huh?" Riddel eyed him questioningly.

"Don't you see? A picture! Maybe you've got a snapshot of the fellow who broke in here and laid in wait for Hymie!"

THAT'S right." The photographer's long lean legs carried him quickly across the intervening space to the bushes where he had hidden his apparatus. "It must have worked!" he called back breathlessly. "The string broke."

"How long," rasped the sergeant, "will it take to develop that picture—so that we can see what story it tells?"

"Just a few minutes—after I get to my dark room. I can dry it with alcohol and have it ready in no time."

"Then let's go—we won't take him"—Hauss nodded toward the body of Hymie Weiss. "Better send the ambulance and the coroner. Got to find out first of all about Boyd."

On their wild ride back, Riddel made one more suggestion at which the sergeant unconsciously raised his foot from the throttle and stared.

"Listen," Henry said. "Don't go feeling I say this because I don't like Boyd, but—let's develop the picture before we say anything to anybody. You never can tell—"

Hauss nodded slowly. "I'd thought of that. Crazy things happen these days. You say it won't take but a few minutes to do the job—"

In Henry Riddel's basement workshop Sergeant Hauss stared at a small print in his hand and made rumbling sounds in his throat, taking a few steps up and down the floor, pausing to look again.

Riddel was working at a feverish

pace, manipulating a large camera fastened against a hole in one wall behind which glowed a powerful nitrogen bulb which shone through a condensing lens.

"Won't take long," he said, "to throw up an enlargement. Then there'll be no doubt at all about his identity."

SOON the job was done, the print dried in an electric heater and stuffed into a large envelope. The impatient officer said hoarsely, "Come on! He was at the bank when I 'phoned awhile ago. Talk about nerve and brass! Thinking he can get away with a cold-blooded murder — not even trying to run away." Hauss swore luridly. "He must be one of these playboy killers who try murder just for a kick! What reason on earth could he have for blowing old Hymie's face off?"

They jumped into the car and a few minutes later slid to a stop before a bank which would some day be the property of Burton Boyd.

"Let me handle this," the sergeant grunted. "Don't say a word till I call on you. We'll give him a double surprise."

Boyd was in his father's office talking to a pretty stenographer. Girls liked the tall, dark haired fellow and men found him a worthy comrade, even though his caustic tongue was inclined to lash out at people whom he despised. The sergeant greeted him abruptly.

"Send the girl away. Want to talk business with you, Boyd."

The other looked up, surprised. Then he grinned amiably. "Want to buy the bank? Or is it a loan?" He shooed the stenographer out.

"We found Hymie Weiss!"

"Drunk again, I suppose? But he means well—"

"Don't try to pull the innocent stuff, Boyd! I don't know what ever made you do such a thing, but it's done."

Boyd looked at Riddel. "Is Hauss drunk, too? What's eating him? Where *is* Hymie, anyway?"

The sergeant shouted:

"He's dead! Murdered!"

Burton Boyd stood up suddenly and the merriment went out of his face like a light.

"Is that straight? Who would have killed that good old Dutchman?"

"Not much doubt about who did it," snapped Hauss. "The fellow that killed him is the one who wrote this note!"

He banged the fatal missive upon a desk and his hot eyes never left the young man's face.

Boyd picked up the paper curiously. As his glance fell upon the signature, his features hardened and his lips curled with rage. Without a word, he stepped to the other side of the desk and picked up a telephone, dialing an office number.

"Haskins? Come in here! Quickly, please."

A WHITE-HAIRED old man entered, the cashier of the bank. Boyd handed him the note.

"Look at the writing—the signature. Is it mine? Did I write it? Tell the truth—as though you were on the witness stand!"

The cashier smiled. "Why, certainly not, Burton. It is not even an attempt at forgery. You simply couldn't have written it so. And—you mentioned a witness stand—it would be easily proven."

Boyd looked at the sergeant, a kindly light of understanding in his eyes. "I don't blame you a bit, Hauss, for being all upset. But I don't know anything about this at all. Who used my name? What's behind it?"

The sergeant's face did not relax. He shook his head stubbornly.

"There's only one piece of evidence that would make me believe such a thing of you. The evidence of my eyes! You shot Hymie Weiss to death with a shotgun, out at the shack, and you were seen! Seen, do you hear? You're a damned murderer!"

BOYD'S face colored dangerously. He murmured, "I'm taking a lot from you, my friend, when you talk like that. Who saw me?"

His glance strayed to Henry Riddel and narrowed suddenly. "Is this fellow, by chance, the one who makes that statement? Are you taking his word for this—for anything at all?" His fists doubled menacingly.

"Not his word—but his work," muttered Hauss, opening the large envelope. "Oh, Boyd — why in the name of common sense does a chap like you commit such a crime?"

He spread the enlargement before the surprised eyes of Boyd and the old cashier, commenting, "We found this in Riddel's camera that he set to catch a picture of the sneak thief."

Haskins, with a start of amazement, sank down in a chair and stared at his employer's son with horror in his eyes.

Boyd snatched up the photograph and saw pictured in sharpest detail the shack, the wind-blown willows with a few tight-clinging leaves etched against the cloudy sky. There was a man in the act of falling in the doorway—body slumped like a punctured balloon.

The face was obscured but any intimate would recognize the figure of Hymie Weiss. Boyd himself, was standing a few yards away with a shotgun at his shoulder, the barrel slightly tilted in perfect portrayal of recoil. His features were clearly defined, and of his identity there could be no slightest doubt.

The hidden camera had caught a murder at the very moment of enactment.

With a sharp cry Boyd dropped to a seat at the desk. Wildly he stared from one face to another, making inarticulate sounds in his throat. Then red rage spread its flaming signal across his features. He sprang up and took a step toward Henry Riddel. Sergeant Hauss thrust him back roughly, growling:

"None of that. One victim is enough for today."

Rubbing a tense hand across his eyes Boyd sat down again. "Give me a minute to think, Hauss. I can see through part of this but I've got to get my head cleared. It's a—surprise." He forced himself to calmness.

"You'll have plenty of time for thinking," Hauss grumbled. "They say that's the worst part of a murderer's punishment."

Boyd spoke to the cashier. "I believe Joe Tully has a microscope in his desk. Please go get it, will you?" He pored over the photograph.

The trembling, overwrought old man brought the glass. Boyd stared at the print from all angles, shaking his head in despair. From his corner Henry Riddel ventured a sneer.

"What are you looking for? A way out? You won't find it in the picture. A camera never lies and mine says you killed Weiss."

"You sneaking pup." Boyd's flat tone reeked with disgust. "You've tried every dirty, dishonest thing in your life and now you've come down to this. You know this photograph is a fake! I believe you killed Hymie!"

RIDDEL shouted, "You're nuts! Me? Why, I got back from Chicago only an hour or so ago."

Boyd was looking through the glass again.

"Not a line—not a mark—not a patch," he groaned.

Sergeant Hauss interposed:

"No use. I've heard about such stunts, but I saw him develop the plate and make the prints. No chance for any monkey business."

Suddenly Boyd's face lighted with relief. He jumped up. "There it is! Right before our eyes. Plain as day, but so simple most anyone would overlook it. See here, Hauss!"

AS he spoke Boyd pinned the picture to the desk with a stabbing finger. His other hand slipped into an open drawer.

The sergeant peered down, demanding, "Well, what? I'm looking."

"The leaves, man! The leaves on the willows."

"Sure, there're a few leaves the frost left. What about 'em?"

"Don't you see? The wind! It blew hard from the east Wednesday when we were out shooting. Remember? See the leaves on this side"—again he pointed—"blowing that way? And today—where's it blowing now?"

"Why, offshore—from the west."

"Look at the leaves on the west side of the tree!"

Suddenly Boyd's hand flashed into view, holding a heavy revolver. "Just a minute, Riddel! Take your hand off that door knob. Come back here, or I'll give you the same dose you gave Hymie!" The sergeant whirled, looking at Riddel uncertainly.

The photographer snarled like a trapped beast. "You're crazy! That picture shows who killed him. I don't even own a gun. I wasn't in town."

Keeping him covered, Boyd laid a sheet of paper over half the photograph. "Look at it now, Hauss. Forget the part that shows the cabin. If you saw only that much, what would you say I was doing?"

"Why, it does look different. Clear enough, that you're standing there shooting clay birds, just like we were Wednesday. Yes, sir! And your gun's pointed a little too high to hit a man at the door of the shack."

The sergeant reached toward his hip. Handcuffs snapped on the photographer's skinny wrists and he began cursing and weeping. Hysteria seized him and he screamed.

"I didn't do it! I haven't got a gun! I just got back from Chicago."

"Probably he jumped the train at Winthrop, five miles down the line, after he killed Hymie." Boyd suggested, "Let's take him out to the shack. We'll have your finger-print man go along. He knew where the shotguns were hidden and on one of them we'll find prints that will convict him."

Henry Riddel was stunned by the accurate guess. He broke down completely, babbling a plea for mercy and confessing the crime.

Sergeant Hauss led his prisoner out to the car. On the way to the station house he said, "Tell me one thing, Henry. How the devil did you do such a slick job on that picture?"

RIDDEL'S face brightened momentarily. "It was a good stunt, wasn't it? Except for those damned leaves. I forgot the wind. Took a picture of Boyd Wednesday, with half a pleat-holder slide in the camera. Then I reversed it and left the box with a string rigged to the shutter. On the other half of the plate it took a picture of Weiss this afternoon. Light and clouds were about the same, but the damned wind—I stood outside the field of the picture and shot him as he started opening the door." Fear seized him and he began screaming again.

The sergeant sighed. "A good thing Boyd has a pair of sharp eyes. You tried to frame him and got caught by your own trap. You might almost call it a 'Picture Frame'."

The Chicken King

The Living Dead Man—Del Manning—Tracks Down the Big Chief of the Poultry Racket in an Action-Packed Story of Crime

A Complete Novelette

By PERLEY POORE SHEEHAN

Author of "Manhattan Monster," "The Three Sevens," etc.

INSPECTOR HAMMOND, head of what had come to be known in the New York Police Department as "The Racket Squad," looked over the sheaf of reports on his desk. It was late afternoon for most people, but it was just the start of another day for him.

Flannigan, his doorman, came in—a smooth-faced and lean oldtimer on the force. "He's here, Chief," he announced.

"Send him in. And Flannigan!—if you see any snoopers around give 'em the boot. Get me?"

"Gotcha, Chief!"

It was getting so that you couldn't be sure of your privacy any more even in your own office—not even here at Headquarters in Centre Street, what with the rackets boring in. Things were terrible.

The visitor entered. He might have been a lascar—an East Indian

sailor just off a blue-water trader; something of a Malay, something of a Chink; powerful, lithe, well set-up. But certainly no white man—so Inspector Hammond judged.

At Flannigan's announcement, the inspector had risen and come round from his desk as if to salute a visitor of importance. Now he went a little red—a danger signal. What ailed Flannigan? Was the old man going crazy? Hammond eyed his visitor.

"How'd you get in?" the inspector asked. "What do you want?"

The visitor let out the fragment of a cackling laugh. But his face and his manner were serious—a face that was strong and deeply lined, with something about it to suggest a skull; dark eyes deep-set and wide apart, quick as a monkey's. For a moment longer he stood there slightly stooped and feet wide apart—he was roughly dressed—the typical sailor.

"It's okay, Chief," he said. "You wanted to see me in make-up."

"For the love of Mike! Doctor Coffin!"

DOCTOR COFFIN and the head of New York's Racket Squad shook hands.

"As Doctor Coffin"—the famous Hollywood amateur detective volunteered—"I had to disappear. I was being tailed, Chief."

"By the cops?"

"Cops of the underworld. The rackets are running their own detective agencies now."

"You're telling me," Inspector Hammond exploded softly. "Smoke?"

Doctor Coffin shook his head. He was the sailor again as he seated himself on the edge of the chair Hammond drew up for him. From his own chair, the New York detective shot his visitor a glance while he lit a cigar. Even now, Inspector Hammond had an uneasy feeling that this wasn't Doctor Coffin at all, but someone else.

"The late Del Manning," droned Inspector Hammond. "I begin to see now why Del Manning was the greatest actor Hollywood ever turned out. Too bad you had to let the world think Del Manning was dead."

"That's all right, as long as I'm alive."

"That's what's worrying me." He puffed at his cigar and shuffled a sheet from the pile of reports in front of him. He shoved this forward and Doctor Coffin picked it up.

"I'll get you the original if you want it," Hammond said.

Doctor Coffin smiled slightly and shook his head. The paper he held was the official photostat—white on black—of a printed message that had been delivered less than an hour ago. Doctor Coffin read it aloud:

> INSPECTOR HAMMOND JUST A FRIENDLY TIP TELL DOC COFFIN TO LAM IF HE DON'T WANT TO FREEZE YOU KNOW ME
>
> THE CHICKEN KING

"Freeze—in the Morgue," Hammond droned. "They're wise to you, Doc. They want you out of this territory."

FROM Doctor Coffin's throat there came a dry cackle. "Who is this guy?" he asked.

"The Chicken King?"

"Yes."

"That's the hell of it. We don't know. A big shot—so big we can't find anyone to put the finger on him."

"Yet he gets his work done."

"I'll say so. When he began to horn in Tony Aleppo was head of the poultry racket and sitting easy. The Chicken King killed him off and most of his gang. Big Jake Kirschbaum tried to take it over where Tony left off. He lasted a month.

"Since then, the Chicken King has been putting the screws to the trade in general so hard that some of them yipped. Two of the yippers got theirs—thrown into their own slush boats, over under the killing sheds on the Jersey shore. We brought in three others and tried to make them talk. They talked a little, but not enough."

"Then what?"

"We're still holding them—compounding a felony—just a stall."

"Couldn't they make bail?"

"That's the funny part of it. A lawyer shows up soon as we make the pinch and offers bail for the three of them, but they wouldn't accept it."

"Why not?"

"Because they knew that, direct or indirect, that lawyer was acting for the Chicken King and that as soon as they were out the Chicken King would get them on the spot."

Doctor Coffin remained in thought a moment, then asked: "Who is this lawyer, Chief?"

"One of the crookedest—and also one of the most dangerous—men in New York." And the inspector mentioned a name. Udo was a part of it. "Why?"

"I'm going to see him."

II

UDO had his office in a brick antique not far from the Criminal Courts Building. It was an old building, but had been elaborately reconstructed. Doctor Coffin, still in his rôle of a lascar, climbed a flight of steps to the second floor and turned to the left. He entered a door and found himself in a large but dim reception room. In one wall of the room was a small window—like the window of a box-office—and here a keen-eyed girl looked him over.

"Mr. Udo is occupied just now," she said. "What name shall I give?"

"Me lite," said Doctor Coffin. And on a paper the girl passed out he scrawled letters that might have meant a name.

"Charas," the girl read.

"Charas" was a name, all right; but not the kind the girl thought it was. Would Udo know better? It looked as if he did. Almost instantly a suave but hard-faced young man came out to show the visitor in.

"This way, Mr. Charas," but the young man himself had a veiled smile on his face. "Charas" was the name of a Hindu opium substitute made from hemp. The dope-trade was familiar with it.

THE guide led Doctor Coffin through an inner doorway into a narrow hall, dark and crooked, then let him into a small room where he could wait in private. It was evident that Mr. Udo's clients were strong for privacy.

"And bugged," said Doctor Coffin under his breath.

The moment he was left alone he'd moved aside a framed diploma—the only ornament on the dusty wall. Back of the frame he'd seen the knob of a microphone. The room was wired. Conversations in this room wouldn't be so private after all.

The door opened and a weasel of a man was standing there—small, thin-lipped, rat-eyed. There was no need of an introduction. This was Mr. Udo.

"You wished to see me, Mr.—?"

"Jimmy Das," said Doctor Coffin.

"You gave the name of—"

"Charas. You savvy?"

The little lawyer entered and closed the door. He looked soft and deadly—like a weasel, like a furred snake.

"You may speak frankly," he purred, as he toyed with a big foun-

tain pen. Doctor Coffin spoke slowly, taking pains with his English.

"I got five hund'ed—six hund'ed pound charas," he said. "I don' know what to do with it."

"Who gave you my name?"

Doctor Coffin smiled and shook his head.

"Where have you got the stuff?"

"You come. I show you."

The instant he said this, Doctor Coffin saw that he would get nowhere along this line. He made a jump for the little lawyer and caught him by the wrist. The lawyer was even quicker. Doctor Coffin should have known it. Udo wasn't the man to interview a strange client—man or woman—without being prepared.

THE fountain pen had barked and spat fire. It was a small handgun of familiar design. In any case, the single shot that the thing contained went wild.

"You!"—Doctor Coffin grated, and he'd drawn his own gun. "If anything happens to me you croak. Wise your gang."

"It's all right boys," Udo spoke up. He turned to Doctor Coffin who still held his wrist and spoke in a sort of hissing whisper, red showing in his little eyes: "And wise yourself up, Doctor Coffin."

They stood there for a silent interval.

The lawyer spoke again: "I've got a report on everything that just passed between you and Hammond. Yes, and everything you got from those poultry rats. How's that for you?"

"Go on," said Doctor Coffin. "You haven't finished your speech."

"And I'm the only man in New York, Doctor Coffin, who can get you out of this man's town alive."

There was evidence of that to some extent almost before the little lawyer finished speaking. From just back of him, Doctor Coffin heard another voice carry on:

"Shall I drill him, boss?"

III

IT WAS one of those mere atoms of time the misuse of which would have been fatal. But Doctor Coffin had known such moments of crisis before. At the first jar of that strange voice in the back of his brain, he'd thrust his gun against the lawyer's stomach, then waited.

Just so much nitro-glycerine this was—ready to pop at the slightest jolt—and the little lawyer knew it.

"Hold it, Tommy," he said.

Something strange about that voice; something strange about that name. "Tommy" wasn't a popular nickname in gangland—for a reason. Doctor Coffin, by a sort of double pressure, with hand and gun, brought himself and the lawyer around on a pivot.

He'd somehow been expecting what he saw there—that keen-eyed girl who'd looked him over from the little window in the front office.

"So you're the Tommy!" he said.

"Don't get fresh," she said—hard as agate.

She held a small automatic in her hand. It was steady.

"What are you going to do with your gat?" asked Doctor Coffin. "Drill your boss?"

Back of the girl was a false door, cleverly let into the wall. To one side of it was a window looking out on a narrow air-shaft—nothing but a dingy brick wall to be seen. The window, Doctor Coffin judged, wouldn't be more than twenty feet above the ground. He could risk a jump, if it came to that.

"You're in a tough spot," said the little lawyer, beginning to frame a case.

"So are you," said Doctor Coffin.

"And I'm telling you again, Doctor Coffin, that I am the only one who can help you out of it. There are two other guns outside that door just back of you. If something—should happen to me, the best you could hope for with all these witnesses against you would be a hot seat up the river."

DOCTOR COFFIN raised his voice enough to carry — carry far, since this room was wired.

"All those who want to had better scram. The Law's outside."

If his announcement did nothing else it served at least to distract attention. A second or two was long enough for what followed. Nothing that the late Del Manning had ever accomplished on the screen ever came off with more telling drama.

He'd given the lawyer a jerk that sent him sprawling toward the girl with the gun. With the same movement Doctor Coffin had sprung and slapped the automatic from the girl's hand.

She screamed a curse then backed. Almost before it had touched the floor, Doctor Coffin had retrieved the automatic.

"Don't move—either of you," he said.

He wasn't even out of breath.

No man acts as swiftly as this without some element of automatic control—something over and beyond the will—making him as dangerous to fool with as a wildcat or a buzzsaw.

The girl knew this. She'd probably been brought up in a school where she'd learned such things. She'd started to say something about him—Doctor Coffin—not daring to shoot a girl. She was right to some extent. But even while she was making her spiel, Doctor Coffin had flipped a handcuff onto one of her wrists. Before she knew what it was all about, Doctor Coffin stooped and clicked the other steel noose on a wrist of the little lawyer.

He warned them: "Don't jerk. They tighten when you do."

Already the manacles were tight enough.

"I'm going to talk to you, counselor," said Doctor Coffin. "I may even take you on as my lawyer. And I'd rather talk to you alone, at that. But I don't trust this Tommy, see? If I sprung her now she'd probably be advertising this little affair of ours to every punk she knows."

"I think not," said Lawyer Udo, arguing the case as cool as if he'd been in court.

"Oh, you don't!" said Doctor Coffin, helping the lawyer to his feet, but careful to keep the guns under his own control.

"I'll tell you why," said the lawyer. "Tommy—her real name is Gertrude Jones—has only got one boy friend. He's doing a stretch in Dannemora. And she's been true to him. Which is lucky. For he's just about ready for parole."

Doctor Coffin swung up a warning hand. Swift as a cat, he had the girl and the lawyer in front of him as he held his own gun on the secret door.

"Come out of that and keep 'em high," he said. "That wall won't stop a bullet."

A white-faced boy pushed in. His hands were up and empty. The girl let out a screech.

"Benny!"

Doctor Coffin didn't have to be told. It was the kid from Dannemora.

IV

HE FRISKED the kid. But at the same time he talked to him like a father. Or talked to him as a good horseman

talks to a colt. "Ho, now, buddy. Take it easy. You're all fresh and suited—"

Benny was unarmed.

Presently, Doctor Coffin unhooked the girl and let her and Benny go into a clinch.

"All right, counselor," he said, "I guess we're set for our private talk."

But he spread a general warning. When he said that the coppers had this place surrounded, he'd meant just that. It was the truth. Those two "guns" Lawyer Udo said were behind the door, who'd taken it on the lam, had been sneezed, pinched, copped—and make no doubt of that.

"What do you want us to do?" asked Benny. He was nervous. He'd just done three years for dropping a guy—and lucky, at that, he didn't get the dance-house, as he said himself, meaning the execution chamber.

"Stay here and talk, if you want to," said Doctor Coffin. "I'll steer you out—and the Law won't touch you—when we're set to go. It all depends on the counselor here."

LAWYER UDO broke in. He spoke with a fine mixture of wounded dignity and cold menace.

"As to that," he said, "I'd feel better if you took off this bracelet."

"Yes, you would. But I wouldn't," Doctor Coffin told him. He turned to Benny and the girl. "Listen, you two. I advise you to stick around. I'm working on a layout, see? I may need your help. If you do help me and we put it through without an upset you're square with the Law for good."

"I won't turn copper," Benny slurred. "I ain't no rat."

"That's why I want you," Doctor Coffin answered. "Listen, Benny; I did a stretch in Copper John myself when I was a kid about your age."

He left them there and, shoving the little lawyer ahead of him, they passed on into the maze of offices beyond the secret door. They came at last to Udo's own private room, which was large and richly furnished.

"Sit down right there in that big leather chair," said Doctor Coffin, "and don't move until I get through telephoning."

HE seated himself at the lawyer's big table and telephoned. Udo, sunk in his leather chair and still handcuffed, strained his ears, but he didn't get very much of what was said. He got enough though to know that Doctor Coffin was intimate with 240 Centre Street—Headquarters—talking to the wheels of the biggest police unit in the world just like a Tammany politician. What was the answer?

He wasn't long in finding out.

"Counselor," Doctor Coffin asked, "how long's it been since you saw the Chicken King?"

"Who?"

"You heard me."

The little lawyer held still. He'd gone a shade whiter, then a shade blacker.

"I have nothing to say," he stalled. "But I'll remind you that I am a member of the bar, an officer of the Courts of Justice—"

"Cut it, feller," Doctor Coffin broke in harshly. And it wasn't the lascar speaking now. It was the ex-convict, the old alumnus of Copper John. "You heard what I just told that kid in there. I've been waiting more or less ever since I got out of stir to take a crack at one of you crooked lawyers. You're not in court now. Not before any favorite, hand-picked judge of yours, at any rate. Get this straight. This is outside the law. But the law's back of me, see? We're up in front."

Will you kindly explain yourself, Doctor Coffin?"

"Why, sure! I've promised certain parties that I'll go out and get the Chicken King. See?"

"Kill him?"

"Naw, not unless I have to. I've promised to turn him over to these certain parties in a certain place. And if I can't give 'em the Chicken King, I'll give 'em—you!" Doctor Coffin's voice dropped to a chilling but confidential whisper. "Were you ever—over at that big shed—on the Jersey shore—where they put the knife to about fifty thousand chickens every night?"

V

EVENTS had moved swiftly all along—ever since Doctor Coffin's call on Inspector Hammond, head of the Racket Squad. Just the same it was early night. Early night was when the day's work just about hit its pace, over there on the Jersey shore, in that killing shed that Doctor Coffin had just mentioned.

A long shed, half on land and half on piles, set in the black waters of the lower Hudson—railroad yards at one end, docking space for scows and tugs at the other.

In the killing shed there was a terrific uproar and an overpowering miasma—to anyone not used to it. It looked, smelled, and sounded like a makeshift receiving hospital close up to some specially busy section of a fighting front.

Outside the switch-engines clanged and snorted, freight cars bumped, and the gabble of carload after carload of chickens, ducks, and geese drowned out the voices of men. Still outside, on the river end, the tugs and steam scows also added their bit in the way of noise, as a ragged fog came drifting up from the harbor with the tide.

But all this was as nothing compared with what went on inside the shed. A long shed, big as the train shed of a first-class railroad station almost, lit up by the hard, white glare of overhead rows of naked electric globes, splotched by streaks and blobs of dense black shadow, hazy with a red mist. There was a whir of knives and a rattle of chain pulleys operating waste dumps and elevators. Hand trucks rumbled and banged. But over this, like the howl of a gale, the shrieks and squawks, quacks and honks of the feathered victims—a living, feathered deluge one minute, fresh-killed poultry the next.

Sam Holder, famous in the trade, made his way through the shed, looking glum. Two sons of his had been killed fighting racketeers. But Sam was the sort who kept on fighting.

He was a bulky man, getting on in years, but still powerful and active. He wore a linen cap pulled well down in front, concealing most of his face, but revealing an area of close-cropped silver hair behind. His street clothes were covered by a long linen coat.

THE killing shed wasn't a place where people loafed—except the few cops on duty and the swarm of inspectors. Killers, pullers, truckers, and others, never skipped a stroke in their smooth routine as Holder passed. Yet there was time for comment.

"Scairt stiff!"

"Him, never!"

"Fraid they'll bump him off."

"He'll bump off somebody else if he gets the chance."

"He'd be safe in jail with the others."

"Wouldn't want to be the Chicken King, if Sam ever meets him."

There was something of the look

and the loneliness of a condemned man about Sam Holder as he made his way through the uproar of the shed toward the open space at the river-end.

Then, just as Sam emerged under the big arc-light into the foggy open air he stood and stared. Three men were coming over the end of the pier from a boat which Sam recognized at once as belonging to the Harbor Police. The boat slid away and the men advanced. It was them Sam had recognized first. They were the three poultry men who'd been staying in prison. They recognized Sam.

They were undemonstrative men. Not much was said, at first—nothing that anyone but themselves could hear. But their handshakes were firm.

And there in the drifting fog, while the dark tide ran, the four of them went into a huddle.

"HE'S taking an awful risk," said Captain Duffy, of the Detective Bureau, to Inspector Hammond. "How does he know that that little rat of a shyster isn't putting him on a hot spot?"

"He's Doc Coffin," Inspector Hammond answered. "He's a genius. Nobody ever knows how a genius knows what he knows."

"Kiddin' me, chief?"

"Sort of. Anyhow, Doc's got this advantage over us. He doesn't belong to the force. He can be just as bent as any crook, when he needs to be—just as bent and just as tough."

"That helps."

"And how! He goes in and jams a gun on Udo. He gets more info from him in ten minutes than we'd be able to get in ten years."

"Short of usin' the shellac."

"You don't put the rubber hose or the boot on a slick shyster like Udo."

"More's the pity!"

"I mean us regular cops—we don't. But Doc could and did, and he's going to do the same thing to the Chicken King."

"Unless he gets the works himself. If I went up against a mob like that I'd want the riot squad. Aren't you giving him any help at all?"

"He asked me to lay off until he phones. He's taking no one but Udo and a kid, Benny Bonn, just down from Dannemora, and the kid's girl friend, who's been working in Udo's office."

"Some mob! And he'll be up against one of the swellest parties of big-time crooks ever pulled on Long Island. I've piped the place—ten acres on the Sound. Forty servants, and every one of them an ex-con or a killer. The house is a palace. I went over it at the time of the Chilton murder there ten years ago. Suspected now of being the chief drop for the Swiss-American dope-ring—"

The telephone on Inspector Hammond's desk buzzed softly. The head of the Racket Squad picked up the instrument and listened.

A girl's voice bleated something over the wire that Duffy couldn't hear. But it brought Hammond to his feet.

"Come on," the Inspector said. "Sounds like our friend, the Doc, is in trouble."

VI

A BIG blue limousine—Lawyer Udo's own—had been waiting at the little old brick office building where the lawyer had his office. At the wheel was a chauffeur in uniform. To him the girl, Gertrude Jones, had appeared with a message that the lawyer would like to speak to him upstairs.

The chauffeur had been met just

inside the office by a man who looked like a sailor and the sailor had a gun. The chauffeur was wired up by this same sailor and left in a locked room. That disposed of him.

A few minutes later Gertrude Jones and her boy-friend, Benny, descended from the offices and entered the limousine, taking the front seat. They were closely followed by Lawyer Udo and Doctor Coffin, who also entered the car, seated to the rear. The car was at once driven away. Benny was an expert chauffeur.

Moreover, Lawyer Udo was often seen to leave his place of business in the company of queer-looking people. His passage now attracted no particular attention — except, perhaps, from one or two plainclothes men, stationed there as a mere friendly attention from Inspector Hammond.

The car was driven, without loss of time, to an old-fashioned hotel near Washington Square where Doctor Coffin happened to be living. One reason this hotel had been selected by Doctor Coffin was that there was a private entrance.

THE suite occupied by Doctor Coffin was rather elaborate, considering the fact that he was a man of modest tastes. But most of the space in the suite was occupied by trunks. There must have been at least a dozen large wardrobe trunks, besides others.

And here Doctor Coffin was not only to entertain his guests with dinner, but also a demonstration in the art of make-up such as had made the late Del Manning famous.

"You, too," Doctor Coffin told Gertrude Jones.

"Me?" she asked.

"Sure," said Doctor Coffin. "You and I are going to that ball at the Chicken King's tonight as the Prince and Princess Tewfik — the slickest dope-smugglers who ever came out of Cairo. Benny's to be our chauffeur, and I'm dolling him up, too."

"And me?" said the little lawyer.

He was still handcuffed — and under the threat of death.

"You're all right — just as you are," said Doctor Coffin. "I'm going to be a little lame. See? And I'm going to lean on you. Follow instructions—you'll get through. Make one bad crack, you're croaked."

THERE was always that chill presence of death about all of this. It was an atmosphere that Doctor Coffin—the late Del Manning—had always loved when he was in certain of his moods. After all, he was "a living dead man." It wasn't just mere accident that had made him Hollywood's leading undertaker, as well as its foremost amateur detective.

Maybe this was going to be his own finish. He didn't know. Anyway, it was going to be his last job in New York for a while—his last "personal appearance" — and he wanted to put it over in a way that would satisfy his own artistic sense.

It was Benny and the girl he played up to most.

After all, they were just a pair of kids—hard, bitter, but young enough to like a game. And Doctor Coffin, millionaire, had hung up a prize in this game that was going to stake them to a fresh start and even chances.

Before dinner was over a dozen evening dresses and required accessories arrived for the girl and a fresh outfit for Benny.

But more even than money or clothes and the prospect of adventure was the fact that Benny and Gert were playing tonight with the great Del Manning—him whom the world thought dead. They saw the lascar sailor disappear. They saw the supposed "Prince Tewfik, a nephew

of the King of Egypt," take his place — a semi-Oriental prince, smooth as oil, dressed like Park Avenue—

He had a dozen different names, but the name that the Chicken King went by when he was occupying his Long Island estate was simply Mr. Rose. None of his neighbors knew him, except by his occasional contributions to local charities. Few had ever seen him—a heavy-faced man with furtive eyes, always in a specially built car that traveled very fast, generally with a pilot car in front and a guard car taking the smoke just behind.

The gates of the big estate were never opened except on rare and special occasions. But every now and then Mr. Rose was known to throw some sort of a party. And at such times even guests were as likely to come by water as by land.

The estate had a fine stretch of shore on the sound, with a landing big enough for ocean-going yachts.

Udo was only one of Mr. Rose's legal staff, and not in the Big Wheel's immediate confidence, either. It had taken a lot of telephoning for Mr. Udo to arrange this meeting between Mr. Rose and Prince Tewfik tonight.

VII

THE place was a palace, all right, built by some millionaire, now dead and forgotten —or broke, and so forgotten anyway. Set in a park that might have been Central Park, in the city of New York, once you got past the monumental gates. But, at that, more like a combination casino and country-club, very fast, but not very swell, as soon as you began to see things closer up.

Gunmen everywhere—not so tough to look at; more like the shills and bouncers of a semi-fashionable gambling resort, smooth and fast; dressed all right, but something the matter with their eyes.

Then the guests — hop and alky written on most of their faces, even when the faces were beautiful. For there were plenty of good looking girls about. Some of them dancing to a forty-piece band. But most of them just strolling about, looking either lit up or bored.

AND flowers—enough flowers for a Capone funeral, in the good old days. And, somehow, a funeral suggestion about all this. Doctor Coffin got it. Death is something you can put a finger on, at times, and say: "This is it—it's here!"

Everything had been free and easy, so far. It looked as if, once you got in, there was nothing to stop you whichever way your tastes might run. There were at least two bars. There was a dining-room with a buffet-supper set that looked like the dining-room of a hotel so far as food and drink were concerned—a hotel in Paris or London; with lobsters and champagne, olives and pickles, cold turkey and hot roast beef; and other things to eat or drink.

But always that hint of the gangster, the ex-con, about the man who served you.

Doctor Coffin slipped the word to the supposed Princess Tewfik to beat it. This was no place for a girl. She'd know where to find Benny. That had all been fixed up before.

At that, the girl wanted to stick around. She thought all this was grand. And she may have wanted to show herself a little. She had on a grand dress and a facial make-up by the world's greatest artist. Besides, how was the "Prince" to make his get-away?

"Beat it," said Doctor Coffin, and that was final.

He had the satisfaction of seeing the girl slip out of a side door where Benny would be waiting.

Doctor Coffin had continued to lean on the arm of the little lawyer —with a grip that he knew the man-weasel could feel.

He'd made this clear to the little man:

The first shot called for would pass right through the lawyer's stomach.

AND Udo had seemed discreet in his questions concerning the presence of Mr. Rose.

At last a servant had come and whispered the information that Mr. Rose was upstairs—"feeling a little indisposed"—and would Prince Tewfik be kind enough to come up.

The moment Doctor Coffin heard this he suspected a plant. But that was nothing now. He'd been suspecting a plant all along. The warning whisper had kept buzzing in his mind all during the long drive out from New York that the little lawyer had put something over on him—something that meant planned murder.

Then, all of a sudden, here it was.

They'd followed the servant down across what was supposed to be the ball-room, but not very many dancers there — and those who were, mostly dancing on a single ten-inch space—"dancing on a dime," as they say. Then, right on along through a doorway with heavy curtains.

Just as the curtains fell into place again Udo jerked.

He jerked with something of the concentrated essence of speed and strength that makes the real weasel the world's champion killer.

But, even so, there was that promise that Doctor Coffin had been nursing in his mind.

Doctor Coffin, at the first hint of that jerk had ducked forward, drawn and fired. He rested on his knee, half slewed round, and saw the little lawyer do a rabbit jump and come down on his head, doubled up —kicking a little, but undoubtedly harmless.

At the same time the servant had fallen.

He must have lunged — with a blackjack, it turned out—just as Udo jerked; and so had missed his blow and slipped.

Doctor Coffin was on him and had poked the gun so hard against his jaw that the muzzle of the weapon started a smear of blood.

THE funny part about this was that the orchestra kept on playing. Not more than twenty feet away —just the other side of those heavy curtains. In that direction, at any rate, the shot hadn't even been heard.

Doctor Coffin threw a quick scan about him, his gun still poked against the servant's face.

"You next!" he said.

The man began to chatter. Doctor Coffin silenced him with a hiss and jerked to his feet.

"You can lam, you louse," he said. "I'm turning off this joint. But show me the Big Boy first."

They let the little lawyer lie where he was and went fast down an arched hallway to a narrow flight of stairs.

"He's up there," said the man, "with six of his mob."

Doctor Coffin slugged the man where he stood—it was a blow he'd learned from Ching, one of his Chinese butlers at his place in Hollywood, guaranteed to bring sleep but not death.

While the man was still rocking to a fall, Doctor Coffin jumped up the stairs. He could see at once that this was some private part of the house—one not meant except for

special guests. There was a smell of opium in the air.

He followed the smell to a door in a softly lit, dome-ceilinged area, richly carpeted and hung with Oriental tapestries.

Just as he started to open the door, someone sprung on him from behind. He shot—back of him—without looking. There was a screech and a fall.

At the same instant he flung himself through the door. It was a large room, shadowy and airless, surrounded by divans on which the figures of men and women could be dimly seen. Then, in the center of the room a single figure—heavy, almost colossal he seemed; the figure of a man in evening clothes with a brutal face stamped with fear, and rage, and surprise.

VIII

THE girl, Gertrude Jones, hadn't made such a quick get-away as Doctor Coffin had hoped. Once she was sure that Benny was there and all set to go, she'd returned to the house. It was as much as her life was worth to telephone to Police Headquarters in New York—and she knew it—but she'd put through her call and found Hammond.

This was out of Hammond's territory, but he was in close touch with State troopers and the county police, also with certain Federal men, all of whom had been hankering for a long time to put on a show at the Rose estate.

But, even then, Benny and the girl had been unable to tear themselves away. This was Del Manning in there. Could they leave him? What was going to happen next? They stalled around.

After all, the stalling wasn't going to be for long.

Suddenly, from an upstairs window toward the rear of the house, there came a crash. Benny shot the car around.

"Good God!" he said. "It's him—and the Chicken King!"

DOCTOR COFFIN could have shot the Chicken King in the moment of that first glance, and the account would have been ended right then—so far as the Chicken King himself was concerned.

There were moments later when Doctor Coffin wished he had let out that shot. So far as killing this big vermin went he had no compunctions. It was all in the way that you looked at things—all right to kill a mad dog, or a rattlesnake, or a louse. The Chicken King was all these things, then multiplied.

But killing the Chicken King wasn't what he'd promised to those three poultry men he'd talked to at Headquarters this day.

Instead of shooting, he dropped head and shoulders and charged—a good deal as a fighting-ram would have charged. But the Chicken King himself was an old gang-fighter, with knowledge of how to kill and maim. For years he'd made his living doing just that—so much for breaking a leg or an arm, so much for maiming a man for life, so much for leaving his corpse in a nice public place.

His parry for this attack was a kick. The kick should have given him time enough to reach his own gun and get it into play. But there must have been a little smoke on his brain. For years, now, he'd also been at the head of the dope-ring in the United States; and this stuff he'd furnished his guests tonight was some of the finest poppy that ever came out of Persia, where the best of the blue smoke came from.

In a moment his kick had been

jerked too high and he was over on his back with Doctor Coffin on top of him—the two of them gouging, beating, strangling like jungle beasts.

When the fight began, there wasn't a window visible anywhere. It was this that started Doctor Coffin to tearing down drapes whenever he got the chance. Anyway, it added to the confusion, and confusion was all that he had fighting on his side just then.

Smokers were coming awake. There were some who were still active. They didn't know what it was all about. But they were finding out.

A girl ran screeching from the room and that was going to bring up the mob from below. They would come primed to kill.

Doctor Coffin gathered all he had of strength and heaved himself and the Chicken King at one of the windows he had bared. What the drop might be, he had no way of guessing. He didn't care greatly. It was great to die fighting—fighting a man-eating tiger like this big brute—

They were through the window, and there was no drop at all—just a sloping roof, and down this they went—over and over—struggling, kicking.

They were at the eaves, then over the eaves.

And not even then was the earth ready to receive them. They'd dropped not more than three or four feet and landed on the top of a limousine.

The limousine slid away—faster—faster—to a rat-tat-tat of shots and a medley of yells.

IX

IT WAS when they were away back in the woods, somewhere, that the limousine stopped. And there Benny jerked the Chicken King to the ground, while Doctor Coffin jumped.

They put the Chicken King in the car and then shot the heavy car ahead again. Somewhere they crashed a gate and were out in the open country.

By a roundabout course they got back to New York. It must have been by a roundabout course, for, by this time, the combined Federal and local raiders were closing in on that big estate of "Mr. Rose" and yet Doctor Coffin and his own private little mob made a getaway.

They went on from New York right through the traffic tube under the Hudson and twisted around through the network of causeways and roads in New Jersey until they found that killing shed down on the Jersey waterfront.

It was now a time of the night when most of the work was over—so far as the killing was concerned. But there was a lot of cleaning up to do.

But, just the same, there were a good many men about—hard-working men of the poultry trade; not a very pretty trade, perhaps, but as good as many. And exceedingly difficult—in bitter weather, in stormy nights, and nights again when the heat of a New York-New Jersey summer intensified in that shed of red horror and made it a sort of anteroom to an old-fashioned hell.

Benny drove the big limousine right down across the car-tracks, and there Doctor Coffin and the Chicken King got out and started to stroll down the big covered shed.

"You've been bleeding these people pretty hard," said Doctor Coffin, softly. "They got a right to have a look at you. Later, I'll turn you in for the cops and lawyers to take their turn—"

But, suddenly, the Chicken King had turned and struck at him.

Doctor Coffin came back with a jolt that made the Chicken King reel.

It was this that really lost him. For he started to run. He knew that if he got out once into those black railroad yards he had a good chance for a getaway.

But he must have lost his sense of direction. And instead of running for the yards, there he was, headed right down the shed.

Just as word got out that here was the Chicken King come on a visit. Sam Holder had passed that word around. So had those three friends of his. Now a shout went up. Some one threw a knife.

"Don't kill him," Sam Holder bellowed. But that was too late. Other knives were out.

This man had robbed them, had had them slugged, had had their friends and relatives murdered.

Once more there was a scream of death in the killing shed—another red haze.

Headlong, blind, feeling as if all the crimes of his life had come back upon him in this final moment—and all his victims had returned to gang him now from the land of ghosts—the Chicken King stumbled onto a slimy spillway, then fell dead from a hundred wounds.

Mystery Bafflers

THE LOG CABIN MYSTERY

From DETECTIVE DUNN'S Case-Book

THREE men, all American artists, had taken over a log cabin in Quebec, Canada, where they had lived in isolation for over a year. Detective Dunn, on vacation, was visiting the local chief of police, Pierre LaBordie. One day, John Leroy, one of the men, startled the little village by reporting the deaths of the other two: Tom Adams and James Knox. Chief LaBordie invited Dunn to help in the investigation inasmuch as the men were Americans.

At the cabin, Knox's inert body was found with one hand stretched out towards an easel. The wound, between the man's shoulders, still wet with blood, could not have been self-inflicted. In the dead man's fingers was a sliver of charcoal, and on a piece of drawing cardboard, was scrawled in French: "C'est Adams, mon asas—" meaning, "Adams is my assassin."

In a rear room the body of Adams was found, stretched on a bed. After a thorough investigation Detective Dunn was convinced that Adams had committed suicide and Knox had been murdered. A knife was still clutched in Adams' stiffened fingers. Blood had coagulated around the wound near his heart.

Leroy said he couldn't understand the reason for the tragedy. He said Adams and Knox had quarreled the previous evening, but not seriously. Leroy had left early that morning, after the postman had arrived, to do some painting along the river. On his return, he stopped to pick up old Dumont, who was to repair the porch. When they arrived they found the artists dead. Dumont confirmed this.

When shown the charcoal message, Leroy said that it was written by Knox, although no specimen of the latter's writing could be found to verify this. Leroy still carried part of the river and blue sky sketch he had been painting. Suddenly, a New York newspaper, found on the bed under Adams' body, was thrust in front of him. It had been brought that morning by the postman. A short item had been marked, stating that the police had finally come across a clue which promised to clear up a year-old bank robbery in which the night watchman had been killed. The men would soon be arrested, and they hoped for a possible recovery of the $300,000 stolen. Leroy seemed slightly uneasy, but he quickly said that the paper had been sent to Adams, and that he had not previously seen the marked passage, which conveyed nothing to him.

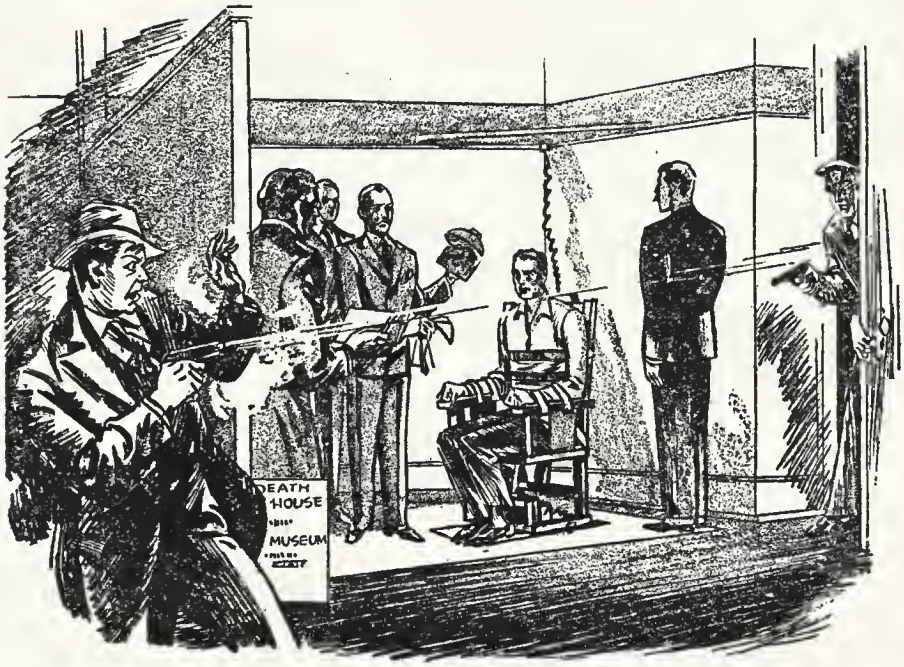
Detective Dunn noted five important points:

1.—There were few pictures in the lodge, and all were obviously executed by the same artist. 2.—In Leroy's color box, which he carried, there was no blue of any sort. 3.—The wounds of the dead men were caused by blades of different lengths. 4.—Adams definitely committed suicide. 5.—In Knox's room, a French primer was found. A book mark in it was a strip, referring to the robbery, from last week's paper.

Detective Dunn solved the mystery from these points. How?

Can You Solve This Problem? You Can Check Up On Your Detective Skill by Reading the Answer on Page 128.

The MURDER TRAIL



Lester Duval Wanted to be a Big Shot in the Underworld—and He Had His Game All Picked Out

By ALLAN K. ECHOLS

Author of "Frame-Up," "Murder Hotel," etc.

LESTER DUVAL assumed an air of carelessness that he was far from feeling. In his pocket rested a gun. He was ready. The long anticipated day had arrived. This was to be his first job—easy money from now on for him. No more dull days of repairing radios for him, what with the big shot racketeers making millions.

As far as his rat-like brain could make out, there was no reason why he shouldn't be one of the biggest of the big shots. It was simple to commit robbery, if a man used his head and thought it all out in advance—like he had done.

He turned into one of the darkened streets of Harlem, paying no attention to the shadowy figures that beckoned to him from the doorways. He was looking for just one such figure in that neighborhood who was slightly familiar to him, and it was toward that figure's hangout that he now turned his feet.

As he neared the neighborhood he sought, he stopped in a dark door-

way and shifted his gun out of his pocket to see that there would be no hitch in its instant draw.

It was a Negro neighborhood. Near the Strangers' Club a black-faced shadow silently fell into step beside him. Duval's heart leaped into his throat, but he was prepared for this. He casually examined his ungloved right hand and noted with satisfaction that he had kept it from trembling, now that the time had arrived.

"Have a little fun, mister?" It was the low voice of the shadow beside him. "Got a little club where you can have a good drink or play a little cards. It's mighty cold outdoors."

DUVAL had rehearsed even this part of his act. He appeared only casually interested.

"Oh, I don't know," he answered indifferently. "I might take a hand of cards—if there's any real money in the game." Clever way, this, of finding out what the lay might be.

"Real money?" the negro repeated disdainfully. "White boy, you c'n git as much action as you kin stand. There ain't no top limit—and plenty o' jack to pay off. What you say?"

Duval allowed himself to be steered up a darkened flight of stairs and into the gambling room of the Strangers' Club.

The place was dimly lighted except for green-shaded lamps that hung low over poker tables and a green-baize covered billiard table where a pair of dice galloped back and forth from one end to another.

The room sounded with the muffled hum of the low voices of the mixed crowd of negroes and whites who sat and stood hunched grimly around the tables. Dealers with tight mouths sat in shirt sleeves, their eyes shaded with green eyeshades and their lean hands expertly rifling and flipping cards and scooping in the multi-colored chips.

Lester Duval's eyes searched the room, then alighted upon that for which he was searching. A door in the back of the room was marked "Strictly Private—Keep Out." When he had fixed the radio at this club it had been necessary for him to replace the aerial on top of the building, and it was then he had learned about the door.

The door did not lead into a private room as it appeared, but actually opened onto a fire-escape outside the building. Thus if the place were raided, the customers could make their escape this way to the alley one floor below. It was now to be used for his own escape.

Just in front of this door sat the cashier's cage and in the cage was the push button that operated the door. Duval had discovered that when he had made use of it to gain access to the roof. Of course, his work had been done in the daytime while the club was not operating.

Inside the cage sat the cashier, great piles of chips in front of him to sell to the players who used them instead of money in the games. And in his cash box would be all the money represented in those games.

IT was a sweet set-up, Duval knew, easy, and just the one for a stick-up man's first job. The place was made to be robbed.

The steerer was at Duval's side as he crossed the room toward the cashier's booth. He was talking to the prospective customer, but Duval heard little of what he was saying, for now his nerves were tingling as though electricity were going through them.

"—play any game you want," the Negro was saying.

"I've got my game picked out," Duval said. He chuckled at the

thought of the double meaning he intended to convey. Never mind, they'd see what his game was in just about a second now.

"You one of them system players?" the Negro asked with assumed interest as he kept Duval headed toward the cashier's booth.

"I got the best system in the world," Duval answered. He wondered why the Negro didn't go on back and take his post outside. He didn't need him to conduct him all the way to the booth. He'd rather there was no one near him.

They were at the wicket of the booth.

"Here's a smart gambler wants some chips," the Negro said with a wink that Duval didn't see.

Lester Duval felt the hair crawling on the back of his neck. The great moment had arrived!

He saw the stacks of bills back of the wire, saw the burly black head set on the massive shoulders of the cashier, but the man and the money seemed blurred. Everything was swimming before him. He was in the grip of a sudden stage fright.

THE man was asking how many chips he wanted but he couldn't make out the words. They seemed distant and far away.

Now!

He felt his hand groping in his overcoat pocket. He touched the gun but it seemed to jump out of his hand. He had to fumble for it.

He became furious because he was nervous. Why couldn't he grip that gun smoothly?

His anger was not directed at himself, however, but at the man in the cage who was now eyeing him curiously and asking him what he wanted. He could see that the Negro was suspicious of him, was doing something about it.

But in spite of everything he could do he could not fight down the panic that was beginning to grip him. It seemed that the room was spinning around him and he saw the steerer move over to the side of the cage. Rage overcame him and he jerked at the gun in his pocket. He was trying to tell the man in the cage to stick up his hands, but his tongue became thick and the words seemed stuttery.

HE jerked at the gun again and this time the sight on the end of it ripped out the lining of his pocket where it had stuck and the gun finally came out. Duval swayed dizzily as he lifted it.

Then his mouth dropped open as the reeling cage started sinking—sinking into the floor before his eyes.

Before he could recover from the paralysis of his astonishment the cage carrying the cashier, the money and the steerer was sunk halfway into the floor, being swallowed up by the trap door over which it had been built for just such an emergency. The steerer had started the mechanism and was riding it down.

In a blind fury Duval pulled the trigger of his gun with a wild-jerking hand. The gun roared several times as the cage disappeared and the trap door closed above it. His bullets were going wild.

He heard the lead sing about his ears as the bullets hit the cage and ricocheted across the room. Still he pulled the trigger again and again.

Then the pistol answered with a hollow click on spent shells. The gun was empty. But it had found a mark.

A man across the room yelled in pain. Duval turned in time to see the man try to rise from his chair at a card table, then topple over to the floor, blood pouring down his forehead.

Murder!

He had accidentally killed a man. Why hadn't the man had sense enough to duck? Duval cursed and blamed the man for getting in the way. Then a terrible panic seized him as he realized that he had crossed the line from which there was no return. He had shot a man.

He looked about him with the wild-eyed look of a trapped animal, then bolted for the door to the fire-escape. He had almost forgotten that in his excitement. He jerked at the handle of the door, but it held. He dropped his gun into his pocket and attacked the door with both hands. He hurled his weight against it and the door flung him back. Again he scrambled to his feet and attacked it, but it stood as immovable as the door to the death cell at Sing Sing.

His eyes traveled around the room. The place was breaking into a pandemonium now after the first paralyzed silence following the roar of his gun. Black, evil faces, literally hundreds, it seemed, were encircling him, white eyes out of the sea of black that was bearing down on him. He was trapped before an onrushing mob.

THEN he saw the heavy chemical fire extinguisher beside the door. With the strength of desperation he jerked it from its box. The muscles of his puny body were suddenly iron in the face of the approaching menace, and he swung the big copper tank over his head. It landed against the door with a splintering crash.

He heaved the weapon again and again and there appeared a jagged hole in the wood through which he could crawl out to freedom.

But there was now a pair of black hands about his neck. To him it seemed that certain death stared him in the face. He knew how these people dealt with their enemies, and the very idea made him sick.

And then purely by accident he found another use for his weapon. As a giant Negro bore him to the floor the fire extinguisher was turned upside down and Duval felt a spray of the acid liquid squirt from the rubber hose in his hand. As a man grasps at a straw when drowning Duval used this last weak weapon of defense; he turned the hose on the man.

As the chemical sprayed the man's face and touched his eyes the Negro relaxed his grip and threw his hands up to protect himself from its acid bite.

Duval seized the opportunity and crawled out the door with one hand still gripping the hose. Then he turned quickly and fed the liquid against the faces of the rushing crowd, aiming through the battered hole in the door, until he brought the crowd to a halt.

HE was outside now and he quickly dropped down the fire escape to the alley below.

His feet touched the ground in a dead run through the dark lane. He bumped against ash cans and posts until he reached the entrance of the alley and the lighted street. With fear-bursting eyes he stopped and peered into the lighted street. It seemed empty.

Still he stood there cringing in the darkness and afraid of the light until he heard the sound of feet approaching behind him in the alley. He would have to run for it.

He buttoned his overcoat and pulled his hat tight down on his head and made a dash into the street. The subway entrance was on that street at the next corner. If he could only make that!

Then he realized that men emerging from the alley would be able to

see him in the lighted street. It would be a simple matter for them to spread the alarm and have him trapped. It would be better to hide.

He made a hasty decision, then ducked into a darkened doorway. As he regained his breath he watched the entrance to the alley while he reloaded his gun. It would never do to get caught with an empty weapon.

No forms came out of the alley. For some reason they were not following him. This seemed strange. Then he remembered; "*What with the law after the big shots, they don't dare report their losses.*" He had read that in a newspaper story about gamblers.

HE hadn't thought of that. The gamblers wouldn't report him to the cops. But on the other hand, he reasoned, these big shots didn't commit murder like he'd done.

He hadn't intended to do it, but he had seen that Negro get up and then fall down with blood on his forehead. It was an accident—but you couldn't convince a jury of that. Duval felt like crying when he had visions of himself sitting in the electric chair.

Then he cursed himself for a weak fool. "You got to take chances." That's what one of the big shots had said. And what's killing one Negro to a man like Duval would soon be? He might as well get used to it.

He convinced himself that episode was over and he even began to be a little proud of it. Already in his mind he could hear the whispers, "Duval, the Killer."

He looked out of the darkened doorway and his eyes turned toward the blue light that marked the subway entrance. It was less than half a crosstown block, but the distance seemed like a thousand miles to him. If he were only safely on that subway train, speeding downtown, it would all be over.

The water was dripping off the eaves of the houses on the street and flakes of snow were falling. He felt cold and lonely. It wouldn't do to stand here all night. It was dangerous. Somebody from that club might pass at any time and report him to the cop.

The cop!

He hadn't had any time to think about the cop. Naturally the cop would be friendly to the gambling club or that institution wouldn't be permitted to continue robbing suckers. He had sense enough to know that the cop couldn't be ignorant of the existence of the place.

Now the cop was an added danger. Perhaps the club had already reported the attempted robbery. This was no safe place to be.

Duval pulled his hat down tight on his head again then gripped his gun in fresh panic. Then he darted out of the doorway and ran headlong toward the subway entrance. If he could only make it he would be safe.

DOWN the block the policeman on the beat had been standing in another dark doorway enjoying a smoke in the sheltered spot before he resumed his cold pavement pounding. As he heard the running steps on the sidewalk he stepped out to investigate. Some drunk, perhaps.

Head down, Lester Duval plunged into the officer before he saw him.

The policeman caught him by the arm to keep him from falling over as the result of the collision.

"What's the hurry?" the officer inquired.

Duval looked up to find himself in the arms of the law! The officer seemed as big as a mountain and as vicious as a lion.

He was trapped! Caught, already! By a flatfoot!

They must have reported him. Sing Sing! The electric chair! Death!

A cold sweat bathed him. He jerked the gun from his pocket and fired point blank at the officer's middle.

The officer sank to the pavement with a groan and Duval broke and ran blindly toward the subway.

Behind him came the feeble cry of the mortally wounded policeman, then the reports of a revolver. He looked around once, caught a glimpse of the wounded officer raised to his elbow, firing with the last ounce of his dying strength. He heard the bullets whistle by his head just as he ducked around the corner and into the subway.

A SUBWAY train was just pulling into the station and from the entrance across the street another man was running. Duval dropped his nickel into the turnstile and boarded the train just as the doors slammed. The wheels of the train ground and the cars moved.

Duval realized then that he had been on the point of firing at another running man who had merely been trying to catch the train and had no knowledge of the murder.

Back there in the snow lay the policeman he had killed. There was no doubt this time he *had* committed murder!

Now he was a wanted man. By this time there would be a crowd collected around that dead policeman. Headquarters would have a report on it; they would put a dragnet out. That meant that every exit from the big city would be guarded by a big policeman who had his description. He was trapped in the city. He couldn't go back to his room and he couldn't leave town.

The train rolled on downtown. It passed Times Square, Chambers Street and ran on down under the river into Brooklyn. Duval sat huddled in the corner, eagerly scanning the faces of the people who boarded the car at every stop. At Atlantic Avenue he had to change trains—and boarded a B. M. T. Coney Island express.

The train ran on toward Coney Island gradually discharging its late passengers into the night. Duval continued to shrink in his corner. If he only hadn't killed that cop! You can kill another crook, like the Negro gambler, for instance, and they won't spend much time looking for you.

But when you kill a cop they'll keep on your trail and burn you at Sing Sing no matter how long they have to hunt you.

As the train became deserted Duval's fright increased. He had sense enough to know that his safety lay in keeping hidden in the crowd. Sitting alone in the train made him too conspicuous. His heart was glad when the lights of Coney Island loomed out of the snowy distance in front of the train that had left its tunnel and was running on the elevated structure.

CONEY ISLAND was not lighted in the blaze of glory it wears on summer nights when Duval slunk into its almost deserted streets. The concessions were closed. Luna Park and Steeplechase loomed up out of the darkness, the ribs of their elevated and scenic railways like the skeleton bones of some gigantic herd of prehistoric monsters.

The streets were quiet, only a few lights burned in the stores and shops that catered to those who lived at the resort town the year round. The very silence of the streets seemed

ominous to Duval, dark and threatening. He needed light.

He turned into an all-night cafeteria. And then his heart stopped beating for the space of a moment, for a policeman and a taxi driver sat at one of the white enamel tables. The policeman's eyes took him in with that habitual policeman's gaze as he entered.

HE stood paralyzed for a fraction of a moment, undecided whether to run or to stand and fight it out. His eyes were held to the gaze of the officer as though he were hypnotized.

The officer was the first to avert his gaze. He was accustomed to people returning his stare and he thought nothing of it. He picked up his cup and emptied it into his saucer, then blew it until it was cool enough to drink. Then he resumed his conversation with the cab driver.

The paralysis left Duval's legs as he saw that the officer was not concerned with him. His common sense directed his next move. He knew it would be the height of folly to run. In spite of his fears, he realized they were likely groundless, he would have to bluff it out.

He controlled himself and walked up to the counter and ordered coffee and a hamburger, carrying his order to a chair where he could watch the officer's back, but be unseen by him. Then with elaborate unconcern he applied himself to his unwanted lunch. He made a complaint that the coffee was too cold and had the waiter give him another cup.

A nickel-in-the-slot radio sat silently in a corner near him. Having withstood the stare of the officer he felt more at ease, felt an attitude of over confidence.

He wanted to convince himself that his fright was over. He fished a nickel from his pocket and dropped it into the radio, turning the dial to the biggest city station. A jazz band blared forth from the biggest night club in the city and a crooner's shrill voice poured out its high-pitched wailings directed at the world's mass of unloved women.

The policeman and the taxi driver looked at Duval with scowls of disapproval for drowning their conversation.

"Turn that noise box lower," snapped the officer.

Duval returned the officer's stare with a blank look and was glad in his heart to find that he could do it. It showed him that his confidence was returning. He did *not* move to reduce the volume of the music.

The radio song was interrupted in the middle. The announcer apologized for the interruption.

"It will only be a moment," he said, "while we read a special bulletin from the police department. Thirty minutes ago a policeman, Timothy Mallory, was brutally murdered by a young bandit whom he stopped to question in Harlem. He lived long enough to furnish a description of his murderer. The killer was young, slight, and wore—"

THE policeman in the restaurant dropped his saucer of coffee and turned to stare at the radio with eyes opened wide with some strong emotion. The taxi driver had risen to his feet and had caught the officer's arm as the latter reeled against the table.

The waiter came from behind the counter.

"That your brother Tim?" he asked the officer tactlessly.

It was not necessary for Duval to hear the answer—he read it in the officer's face. The policeman was between him and the door. Panic more terrible than any he had before experienced, maddening panic seized Duval as he saw he was trapped—

trapped by the voice from the radio he himself had started.

The radio voice continued.

"The youth wore a brown overcoat. And Mallory particularly noticed he had on a purple shirt—"

DUVAL waited for no more. The officer, staring at the radio, was also bound to see him sitting beside it, see his shirt. He had the horrible sensation of hearing himself described to the dead policeman's brother while he sat by the instrument for comparison.

His hand slipped into his overcoat pocket and gripped his gun. This was the end, but he meant to account for himself. He'd fight it out before going to the electric chair.

He started forward. The officer's table was between him and the door, but the officer made no move to intercept him. Instead, the policeman seemed to sit hypnotized by the radio's announcement.

But Duval could not make his legs carry him slowly past the man in blue. The minute he was in a position so that the officer was no longer between him and the door he broke into a sudden run for freedom, speeded by terror.

Duval was already at the door before the three men in the restaurant grasped the significance of his dart for freedom.

"And the bandit boarded a subway train headed towards Brooklyn—" The broadcast was cut short as the nickel's worth of service expired.

"That's him," the taxi driver shouted, spinning around and sprinting toward the door.

Duval was already gone. He was racing down the street, looking about frantically. He dashed across the thoroughfare to the empty taxi belonging to the policeman's friend. Behind the wheel of the car he jammed his foot on the starter and turned the ignition key. The motor sputtered a moment, then died. Its engine was cold and slow to respond.

Duval saw the officer and the driver emerging from the restaurant door, saw the big gun in the policeman's hand. He slid out of the seat of the car and darted into the building before which it was parked.

It was dark in the lobby. He came to a door and kicked it viciously, then threw his weight against it. It was not a strong door and his second effort sprung the lock and the door flew open.

IT was dark inside, even darker than out, but a dull gleam from the street lamps out of doors made it possible for Duval to see a little. Then he almost shrieked aloud at the sight.

The dark room was full of people!

Silent people who stood and sat all about, motionless.

Near him stood a policeman!

It was too late to back out now. Duval drew his weapon and fired a shot into the form of the officer, squarely into the middle at not more than five paces.

The uniformed man never moved. Duval let him have another load, then turned to fight his way toward the rear of the building. Every man who stood in his way would get a load of lead. Trapped like a rat, Duval snarled.

He expected to hear an answering shot from the policeman inside the door if he were still alive, but not a shot was returned. It was uncanny and it filled him with a strange sense of dread, a fear of the unexplainable.

He stumbled into the figure of a man. His gun hand swung and he sent the barrel crashing toward the figure in the dark, aiming the blow at the man's head, then rushed on

without waiting to hear the man fall.

His eyes were now getting accustomed to the utter darkness of the place and he could see more figures. He was entirely surrounded. Yet the uncanny, ghostly crowd made no noise, uttered no sound.

COLD sweat poured from his face and his hands trembled. The footsteps behind him were approaching cautiously. He had to escape some way before utter insanity got him. He knew he was going mad.

He groped his way along in the darkness, swinging with his left fist and the barrel of his gun at every figure that touched him.

Then he found himself in a low and narrow hallway in which burned a solitary feeble red light. Still it was light and he must be in the dark. He ducked into the first door he saw.

Then he uttered a loud shriek and his knees gave way.

He dropped weakly to the floor while his eyes stared in horrified fascination at the scene within five feet of him.

A dark-skinned native of some foreign country lay bound on the floor.

Over the prostrate body stood a gigantic elephant whose uplifted foot had just crushed the man's head into a bloody pulp, while other natives looked on. The floor was covered with blood and the mangled remains of the man's head still showed the imprint of the elephant's ponderous foot.

Choking and crying, Duval crawled out of the room of horrors too weak to rise. Only mad fear drove him on, fear of the footsteps behind him.

He crawled into the hall with the red light and tried the next room. And again he gurgled, speechless with terror. He was gazing on another murder.

In the feeble red darkness he could discern a man lying on a bed, dressed in pajamas. On the man's face was written mortal agony and fear. He was struggling with a man and woman who stood over him.

The man and woman were beating him over the head with a window sash weight and the man held in his hand a cord with which he was trying to strangle the victim. The bed was saturated with blood.

HE crawled out of the room, now almost exhausted. The human body can stand only a given amount of emotion, either pleasure or pain or fear, and then it becomes benumbed and can stand no more. Lester Duval had reached the limit of his agony.

The footsteps behind him were growing louder as he made his way into still a third room—which sent a final chill through him, but left him benumbed.

It was the Sing Sing execution chamber. Duval had seen the picture of it and recognized it, yet he did not wonder why it was here. He was beyond wondering at the strangeness of anything.

An electrocution was even now in progress. A man sat in the chair with a leather helmet over his head and his hands and legs strapped to the chair. From the leather helmet ran coils of wire, and coils of wire ran from his legs.

Duval's mind seemed to become unusually clear and he studied the details of the arrangement. He saw little drops of water running down the man's forehead and wondered if the man was perspiring. He did not know that the executioner put a wet sponge in the helmet to make the contact more certain.

He saw a priest, the attendants and

the witnesses. It all seemed, somehow, very natural to him, and not surprising. It seemed that he had really been expecting to see this thing for a long time. He breathed with a little more freedom than he had for a long, long time. He was tired, and he had the sensation of having come home after a hard day's work.

SUDDENLY he heard voices and the execution chamber was flooded with brilliant light. He was surrounded now, those queer people in the other rooms were moving about. He even felt calm enough to wonder who they were and why they were standing around in a dark building in Coney Island, those kings and generals and ladies in queer costumes. He wondered if it were some queer masquerade dance he had stumbled on.

Then a voice, the voice of that cop who had been in the restaurant across the street.

"You, come out of there with your hands in the air. I'm arresting you—"

Duval's eyes were glued to the electric chair. He saw the nickeled electrodes that would shoot the killing current through him, the black panel with its switches and copper wires. It was even more fearful than the cop, more to be dreaded than the officer's bullets.

Instead of answering he dropped behind the figure of one of the men in the room and trained his gun on the door. There was a repetition of the order, threats from the officer outside.

Once the officer's gun-hand, gripping a weapon, showed itself in the door. Duval fired and it was withdrawn.

There were voices outside. The taxi driver and the waiter were trying to keep the officer from rushing Duval.

"Don't do it," they were arguing. "Smoke him out. There's no use to let a rat like him kill you, too."

Presently Duval saw what they meant. The waiter must have sent in a general alarm, for presently there were more voices.

Then there was a thump on the floor and a sputtering noise near Duval. He looked up to see where it had come from and saw that the room was one of a series of stalls that individually had no roofs. He picked up the metal object that had a burning fuse attached and flung it back at the crowd just as it exploded. It was a police gas bomb.

Now the bombs became thicker and Duval cried and ranted because the officers would not show themselves and shoot it out. Why wouldn't they give him a chance? He'd like to kill six more cops—he still had just that many cartridges left.

The air was getting heavy in the room—he couldn't last long. His eyes were already filling with tears from the gas.

"You dirty dogs!" he spat. "I'll show you you can't mess with a big shot." He cast one defiant look at the electric chair, gripped his gun tightly and darted out of the room.

THE newspaper boys on the police beat were questioning Pat Mallory, the brother of the slain policeman, Tim, who had been killed in Harlem.

"How'd you happen to catch him so quick?"

"I didn't," Mallory admitted modestly. "He really caught himself. He was just a punk that thought he was bad. He tried to hold up a gambling house but failed. It was panic that made him shoot Tim and it was panic that made him give himself away to us in the restaurant. There's plenty o' punks dressed in them snappy

(*Concluded on Page* 128)

Gossie Dabney Could Do Anything When He Was Hopped Up—and Was Always Ready to Kill at the Drop of a Hat

The GUN

By ARTHUR J. BURKS

Author of "Death on Schedule," "The Yellow Hand," etc.

GOSSIE DABNEY entered the pool hall on Thirty-second Street. It was on the second floor, a huge place of many tables. To Gossie it looked like an immense cathedral, but then, at this time, almost anything looked immense to Gossie. His steps were snappy, the pupils of his eyes mere pinpoints, sharp and glittering.

A slender man, Gossie, dressed to kill, a tailor-made suit, complete from head to heels, and a pink silk shirt to make it stand out from others of its kind.

In his right coat pocket the hand of Gossie gripped the butt of a snub-nosed automatic with a feeling of assurance.

The mob looked up as Gossie came in.

"I wonder," said one, "whether he's after somebody tonight. Wait'll he starts playin' and then you can

tell! He always hires a table to play and try his eye-sight."

The roughnecks in the pool hall on Thirty-second all knew and hated, and feared, Gossie Dabney. A devil with a gat. Chained lightning. A terror on wheels. No heart. No conscience. Kill at the drop of a hat.

The sleeves of Gossie's coat, and of his bright pink shirt, covered the blue spots on his arms, marks of the needle, but the gangsters, and small time crooks in the pool hall knew they were there, because they knew Gossie Dabney.

FROM an unobtrusive corner rose a man who was plainly out of place here. He strode forward somewhat diffidently to meet Gossie the Wop. They met. Gossie did not take his hand from his pocket. He spoke to the other man out of the side of his mouth, a habit learned in stir.

"I'm set to go, fella!" he said. "A hundred fish, says you! I'll take twenty-five now!"

"You sure you know the man I want to get?"

"Yeah, sure! Old Steve Lankershim, the millionaire. Your uncle, isn't he? You his heir, ain't you?"

"That's my business, Gossie, see?"

"But I may make it mine, too," snarled Gossie. "Killin' ain't what it used to be. It's hard to get a gun to do your dirty work for a hundred fish in these hard times. Yeah, I got ole Steve pegged, all right. You better meet me where you said you would. If I'll kill a stranger for a hundred fish, I'll kill a man I know who owes me seventy-five, for what he owes me, see?"

"I'll have the money," said the well-dressed stranger, "and I'll meet you like I said. You sure you won't get caught?"

"Sure as sure! I know my stuff. I shoots fast and gets away clean! If I gets caught I gets caught, an' I ain't no squealer."

The stranger peeled off twenty-five dollars, gave them to Gossie, who received them with his left hand and tucked them into his trousers pocket. The stranger then slipped from the pool hall and took the elevator down.

Gossie looked at the clock. Nine-thirty in the evening. He wouldn't make a move until midnight.

He sat down and watched the others in the place for exactly two hours, by which time his hands were trembling, the pupils of his eyes were larger, and he was apparently a nervous wreck. He got up, sighing, after another glance at the clock, and slipped into the lavatory.

When he came out, a few minutes later, he was the same self-assured Gossie who had entered the place earlier in the evening.

HE took a cue, called the attendant, had the balls racked up. Then he broke them swiftly, and casually, surely, with never a waste motion, pocketed the fifteen balls in rotation, the feat of an expert with a cue. From the one to the fifteen ball. Some were double bank shots, some single bank, some three ball combinations.

But Gossie never hesitated, never had to puzzle long over any one play, and when he finished running down the fifteen balls, while a crowd stood gaping around him, he put his cue away and stalked from the place.

"Hopped up for a million!" said one man. "Could have driven the cue ball through the eye of a needle after a triple bank! Ball looked like a pea to him, pockets like barn doors! I'd hate to be the poor sucker he draws down on tonight!"

Steve Lankershim was a retired banker, a bachelor, who lived in a couple of rooms on the seventh

story of an exclusive hotel. No family remained to him, save a nephew of whom he wasn't especially proud. His fortune ran close to the million mark, and the nephew would inherit; but Steve was thinking of changing his will, and had conveyed that intelligence to the nephew in a curt letter.

"Make something of yourself, give up your shady companions, or you won't get a dollar of my money. At my age I can't take chances, and unless you convince me within a month that you are to be trusted, more convincing proof than heretofore, I'll change my will and cut you off with a dollar! Is that clear?"

The nephew had taken action, and even now, just as Steve was thinking of retiring, Gossie Dabney was hurrying to keep a rendezvous with Steven, a rendezvous with death.

GOSSIE'S step was sure, his hand still clutched the handle of that snubnosed automatic, and his eyes bored ahead of him through the gloom like gimlets. He was primed for his task. A fella could do a lot of things with a hundred dollars, and he had been needing the money. Some of the twenty-five on account had been expended for a fresh supply of "the stuff," just on the off chance that it would be needed.

On the corner of the street across from the hotel, Gossie leaned negligently against a lamp post, and looked furtively into the lobby of the hotel. A good hotel, always busy. It wouldn't do for folks there to get a look at his mug. They might remember.

Gossie's eyes raised to the seventh story of the hotel. He counted the windows from the nearest corner. Six. The seventh opened into old Steve Lankershim's sitting room, and a light was still burning; but even as he noted this, the light flicked out.

Gossie looked down the street and up. One cop in sight, going away down the block, twirling his club.

GOSSIE grinned to himself, looked at his left hand. It did not tremble.

Gossie moved swiftly across the street, ducked into an alley, found the fire escape and started running up. The hotel was seven stories high. He had his campaign all mapped out. Knew exactly what he would do.

Old Steve always locked his doors, and they were wired. But he always left a window open—onto a ledge which looked down seven stories into the street, with scarcely standing room for a fly!

But Gossie grinned. He wasn't afraid, knew exactly what he had to do, and running down those fifteen balls had shown him that he was right for the task in hand.

He reached the seventh story. The fire escape was around the corner of the building from the window by which Gossie wished to enter. Gossie climbed clear to the roof, and paused for a moment in thought. There might be someone on the roof who would see him and give chase, thus diverting him from his purpose and robbing him of a potential seventy-five dollars.

But people seldom looked up from the street—and Gossie knew that he could do the other thing. Never, not hopped up, could he have done it. He'd have been scared to death.

Now, however, it was different. The margin of safety looked as big to him as the pockets on that pool table had looked. He slipped from the ladder which curved over onto the roof, grasped the projection of the roof, his feet swinging free over

space that would have shot his body down for seven stories into the black alley, and started inching his way along.

He moved swiftly, with never a pause, never hesitating. He knew what he had to do, and he was doing it. The depths below him held no fears for him. He worked swiftly away from the safety of the iron ladder which curved over the roof, hand after hand, feet kicking upward until he could change his grip as often as he wished.

THEN the corner, around which he worked with never a pause. Then, at long last, the open window, out of which the wind was sucking the end of a curtain. He'd have to swing back and forth, gather momentum, and hurl himself through. A job for a cat—or for Gossie the Wop, when he was hopped up.

He paused, looked down for the first time. People like ants below him, and the passing cars looked small. A police car flashed past below, siren screaming. It did not stop at the hotel. A half hour from now, or maybe tomorrow morning, it would shriek again, and the car would stop so that the bulls could look into the death of Steve Lankershim.

Gossie's body was swinging back and forth now, back and forth. Then a last mighty heave and he was through, pulling himself erect as a jumper does who wishes his last long jump to be good, waving his arms. He had entered the room with no more noise than a cat would have caused.

His snub-nosed automatic leaped into his hand. He glided to the door of the room in which he knew Steve Lankershim would be sleeping, or maybe he didn't sleep yet. It would make no difference. The automatic would speak once, a short bark, and Steve would be through, and nothing to fasten the crime on Gossie Dabney. Nobody had seen him enter the hotel, and nobody would see him leave.

It was a cinch.

He entered the bedroom. He deliberately flashed on the light. His little gimlet eyes fastened on the white-maned head of Steve Lankershim, where it rested on the pillow. The old man's eyes snapped open. He sat up in bed instantly.

"Who are you?" his voice shrilled.

"Just your little playmate, Gossie," replied the Wop. "Hope your soul's clean, and all that sort of thing. Your name's Steve Lankershim, isn't it?"

"Why do you wish to know?"

"Which means that it is, since you ain't denyin' it. Ta, ta, Steve, I'm going to collect seventy-five bucks!"

The automatic cracked once. A hole appeared in the forehead of Steve Lankershim. His body sagged, went back limply, his arms wide on the coverlets. Gossie listened for a moment, but heard no sounds. Then he grinned, took enough time to use his needle again, and swung back to the window.

CARS still hurried along below, far below, little goods box cars, and people like ants. Gossie looked up at the roof projection. He would have to jump well, and there would not be a chance for a second jump; but he knew he could do it. He could do anything, the world was his oyster, when his nerves were right.

He stepped to the window ledge, turned his palms inward toward his own face, disdained to look down again, and jumped outward and upward. When his extended fingers reached and grasped their objective,

he felt he was safe. For one infinitesimal instant he would have to hold by one hand while he twisted his body around and changed the grasp of the other hand, so that he would end facing the wall of the hotel.

Two times he must hang by one hand, for the fraction of a second. It was to laugh. He could have hung for half an hour by the tips of his fingers, rolled a cigarette with his free hand, and smoked it to his lips before moving on again. He swung back with all the assurance he had displayed upon the outward journey, reached the iron ladder, and hurried down, into the alley, thence to the street, without apparently having been seen once.

He collected his seventy-five dollars before morning, and turned in to sleep until long after noon, as was his usual wont.

"COME on, Gossie!" said a silky voice. "We wanta find out what you know about Steve Lankershim."

The bulls! The room was full of them. One of them had shaken Gossie awake.

"What the devil?" said Gossie. "What you guys want with me? You've got nothing on me!"

"Well, you can be sociable, can't you? You wouldn't refuse to chin-chin with your pals, would you?"

Gossie's nerves were shrieking for drugs, but here was no chance to grab off a shot. Maybe, if they did not grill him too long, he could stand the torture until they finished. There was nothing on him, he knew. The murder weapon had gone down a drain, and he had in his clothing a weapon of different caliber. A gunman of parts, Gossie. He had different guns for each killing. One couldn't take too many chances.

He dressed and followed the officers. some of whom were in plain-clothes.

He sat beside one of them as the police car slammed through town, siren shrieking. It drew up before the hotel, and the officers, two of them with Gossie between them, entered the hotel, strode through the lobby, and took the elevator to the seventh floor. Just before entering the place Gossie looked up at the roof projection, and shuddered as with the ague. He was deathly afraid of high places—when his nerves were jangling.

THEY opened the door to Lankershim's suite, strode through with Gossie to the bedroom, where the old man still lay, with a sheet pulled up over his face.

"What's wrong here?" said Gossie. "What's the idea of putting the screws on me over this stiff?"

"We're interested in how he became a stiff, Gossie," said a plain-clothes man in charge of the investigation.

"Any fingerprints of mine here?" snarled Gossie.

"No."

"Find the knife he was killed with?"

"He wasn't killed with a knife, and you know it, Gossie."

"Do I? You know more about what I know than I do."

"Look behind you, Gossie."

Gossie the Wop whirled. Sitting manacled in a chair to the right of the door, brought in after Gossie had entered the death chamber, and while the talking had been going on, was Clark Lankershim, nephew of the murdered man. But Clark shook his head almost imperceptibly at Gossie.

He hadn't squealed.

"You're a hophead, Gossie," said the detective conversationally, "and

you were some hopped up when you came in here last night. What we want to know, though, is how you got in and out again, and left the doors locked behind you—*on the inside.*"

Gossie flashed a glance, without turning his head, toward the window, the outer window. The detective laughed.

"Didn't you see me watching you in that mirror ahead of you, Gossie?" he said. "Oh, you didn't move your head, but you did move your eyes. Say, Jack," to one of the officers, "go up on the roof and look over the wall to the roof projection which runs around the place, and you'll probably find all the fingerprints you need!"

Then the detective grinned at Gossie.

He led him back to the window, the very one through which Gossie had swung last night, held him close, so that he leaned far out, and could look down into the street. Gossie screamed and pulled back into the room. Beads of perspiration broke out all over him.

"Gawd!" he screamed. "Don't make me get so close to the window! I can't look down from high places unless I'm—"

And then Gossie stopped.

"Unless you're hopped up, eh? I know that. That's why we knew a hophead had done it, and there weren't many to choose from."

"Who's this guy?" said Gossie, turning back to Lankershim.

The detective brought a piece of paper from his pocket. Old Steven, it seemed, always kept carbon copies of his correspondence. This letter was a carbon copy of the letter in which he had advised his nephew that he was changing his will.

"This is the motive," he said, "and this guy paid you, Gossie? How much?"

"Far as I can see," said Gossie, "you've got nothing against me."

"No?" queried the dick. "Why'd you look up at this window as we came into the hotel? Why'd you look at the outer window a bit ago? Why were all the doors locked on the inside?"

At this point the officer sent to the roof returned.

"Got oodles of prints, chief," he said, "and if they don't tally with Gossie's, I'll eat them."

Then Gossie Dabney wilted.

"You've got me, I guess," he said. "But if I fry, I won't fry alone—not when this guy put me up to the job and paid me for it."

And Gossie, there in the death chamber confessed his crime before the law. When he had finished—and a dozen had heard him, and Clark Lankershim had fainted when he had been named by Gossie—the detective laughed.

"You fool!" he said. "Don't you know that the janitor of this building swabs off all of the roof he can reach every morning? Uses lye water, too! We probably wouldn't have found one fingerprint with a fine-tooth comb!"

Next Month: CONCERTO OF DEATH, by James H. S. Moynahan.
A Tense, Gripping Story of Mysterious Murder on the Stage of a Theatre

The Crimson Blade

"Snow" Bailey Said He Was Framed—and Detective Murphy Decided to Check Up on His Story

By JOHN L. BENTON

Author of "Redeemed," "Three of a Kind," etc.

DETECTIVE THOMAS MURPHY took his hat and raincoat out of his locker and started out the front door of the station house when the deep voice of Inspector Flaherty poured out of his office.

"Come in a minute, Murphy. Here's a little call you can look into on your way home. Like a good boy, huh?"

Murphy hid the annoyance on his face and slid one leg over the corner of the inspector's desk. "Sure. What is it, Dan?" The two had been friends and neighbors for years.

"Doctor named Mortimer Davis has an office at this number up on Fifth Avenue. Called and said a man threatened to kill him at eight o'clock promptly. Thinks it was a crank, but wanted us to send up somebody in case something did happen."

Murphy looked at the call slip and grunted. "Haven't I seen this bird's name before?"

"Yeah. The good Doc was mixed up in the death of one of those foot-

loose women on Broadway last year. We couldn't get anything on him, but the lowdown seems to be that he's got a bunch of big-shot women snowbirds that he supplies with refreshments: — heroin and morphia."

Murphy folded the paper and put it in his pocket.

"I'll drop in," he said. "But it seems a shame to butt in if somebody really intends to knock him off. These crooked doctors—"

"There's likely nothing to it," Flaherty said. "These dopies are always getting ideas. Look in on him, anyway. It won't take a minute."

MURPHY shot his roadster up through Washington Square and pulled it to a halt in front of a new apartment house on lower Fifth Avenue. The paper he carried gave the apartment number he sought and he climbed the one flight of stairs and knocked on Doctor Davis' door.

He knocked a second and third time without receiving an answer. Still waiting, he glanced at his watch. The hour hand stood squarely at eight. He heard no sound within.

Undecided as to his exact course, he tentatively tried the door knob. The door was unlocked and swung open to his pressure. The entrance hall was dark but he caught the soft glimmer from a lamp that was lighted somewhere in the apartment outside his line of vision.

Hesitating, uncertain as to whether he should intrude, but curious about the unlocked door, and particularly about the silence in the light of the message phoned in to Police Headquarters, Murphy started forward, his footsteps buried in the heavy Oriental rug. Then he stopped suddenly. Somebody within was making some kind of a sound, something like the opening and closing of drawers and the shuffling of papers.

Murphy dropped his hand into his pocket and transferred his automatic into his raincoat, then tiptoed forward with his hand still clutching his weapon.

Silently, thus, he traversed the living room which was buried in darkness, and came to a dining room. He rounded the open door, and as he turned, intent on the noise ahead, his elbow brushed against the shade of a glass-bowl table lamp and the whole thing crashed on the hardwood floor with a loud din.

Murphy swore an oath and darted forward through the dining room, headed toward the alcove from which the light glowed.

Even as Murphy hurried forward a figure darted from the far side of the portieres which set off the alcove and dived out the window.

Murphy whipped out his gun just as the running man threw his first foot on a lower step of a fire-escape which surrounded the window.

"Halt!" Murphy's gun bore down on the man, but the runner seemed not to hear. He dropped suddenly.

MURPHY'S gun roared and he saw the man throw up his two hands and shudder just as his figure disappeared below the window sill into the darkness below. Murphy knew his bullet had found flesh.

Even as he shot, Murphy's eye took in the picture in the alcove. A man in a blue velvet dressing gown sat before a mahogany desk. His head lay on the desk. The handle of a knife protruded from his back and a rivulet of blood soaked his garment. The lamp on the table shed its bright glow over the dead man.

Murphy caught all the details of the picture as he hurried toward the

window sill and climbed out. He dragged a flashlight from his pocket and shot its rays to the concrete court, only a floor below.

In the yellow circle of light he saw a figure lying below, moving with a feeble effort to arise. Keeping his light trained on the man, Murphy lowered the pull-up ladder of the fire escape and let himself down.

MURPHY turned the man on his back and examined him. Blood ran from his shirt where Murphy's bullet had entered his side in the region of his heart.

The man in his agony glared up at Murphy with ugly, vicious eyes that reflected the light like those of a cat. His lips were drawn back over yellow teeth and his suffering was written on an evil face that was ashen and prematurely old.

And Murphy's quick eye caught something else, a thing that not one person in a thousand would have noticed. Holding his torch in the man's face, Murphy noted his eyes. The pupils of them were dilated and the edges of the black circles of the iris instead of being clear cut were feathery. That was the inevitable mark of the drug addict.

Then recognition came to the detective. The creature was "Snow" Bailey, one of the flotsam that drifted around in the lowest backwash of the underworld. He was known to the police as a petty dope addict and sneak thief. It was evident to Murphy that the man's worthless career was at an end.

He stooped over the man and questioned him.

"What did you kill the doctor for, Bailey?"

The dying man looked back glaringly. "I didn't kill nobody," he said huskily.

"Listen, Bailey. You stabbed Doctor Davis in the back. You haven't a chance to live, so you'd better come clean if you want us to do anything for you." Murphy spoke impatiently.

"I tell you I didn't kill him," Bailey coughed.

"Then who did?"

"I don't know. He was dead when I come in."

"Yeah?" Murphy answered sarcastically. "Then what made you stay there when you saw him dead? What were you there for in the first place? You were going through his desk."

The man coughed and a fleck of blood bubbled out on his lips. "I was framed," he said feebly. "He told me the doctor was gone and I could find—" The man hesitated.

"Snow?" Murphy finished for him.

"Yeah. Said there must be a pound of it in that desk. I wasn't gonna leave till I looked, even though I knew I should, when I seen him dead."

"Who told you about the doctor having the snow?"

THE addict's life was ebbing fast and Murphy asked his question quickly. The man looked back at him with hatred, his inevitable attitude toward the cops.

"Wouldn't you like to know?"

"Listen. You'll never have a chance to get back at the man that framed you. You'd better tell me, then you'll know he'll be taken care of. You haven't got anybody else to do it for you."

And therein Bailey showed he was not made of the sterner stuff of the gunmen who died without squawking. Pain wracked his body and he knew he was dying. And that frightened him. He started to tell.

"It was Pietro—" A fit of coughing seized Bailey, and a hemorrhage of blood gushed from his lips.

"Quick," Murphy insisted roughly. "Pietro who? Where does he live?"

Bailey's voice came in a barely audible whisper, after a great effort —which was his last.

"Over Davis—fourth—" his words trailed off and Murphy could not revive him.

Snow Bailey had used his last hypodermic.

Tom Murphy left the man lying in the court and remounted the fire-escape ladder. Back in Davis' apartment he telephoned headquarters and reported.

Then he examined the corpse. He did not touch the body of the dead doctor at the moment, but studied his desk carefully.

None of the few scattered papers on the desk nor in the drawers suggested any help. Then he examined the waste basket.

It had been freshly cleaned, but something in it caught his eye. He lifted the basket and examined the contents more closely under the light. In the bottom of the basket was a small amount of substance resembling ashes, but with the difference that it was much lighter in color and the flakes were larger.

The substance was distributed the same as ashes would have lain if a paper had been burned in the bottom of the basket.

MURPHY recognized the substance, although it had been a long time since he had seen it before, as the result of his own experiments in chemistry. It was the residue left when paper is soaked in sulphuric acid.

The trick was known to Murphy even though he had seen no outside use of it in his detective experience. It was used when the writer of a note wished the note to be destroyed after the contents had been read. The paper was soaked in the acid, then dried and the note written. But the acid continued to work and in a short while completely destroyed the note, paper and all.

Somebody had sent Doctor Davis a message, and had assured himself that it would not be kept as evidence of any kind!

Murphy dumped the fragments into an envelope and put it in his pocket.

When Murphy replaced the waste-basket beside the desk it touched the dangling hand of the dead man. A look of curiosity overspread his face.

ONCE again he shoved the basket against the dead man's arm. He grunted an exclamation of satisfaction. The arm didn't move when shoved; it was rigid.

He examined the body more closely. The whole body of Mortimer Davis was rigid.

Satisfied with that, Murphy went about his routine examination of the room and had it almost completed when Inspector Flaherty and the medical officer arrived. He told them of the events up to date..

"And it looks like it ought to be simple," he said to the inspector. "So far, it seems that somebody wanted to kill Davis and pass the buck.

"Davis was killed at least two hours before eight o'clock. His body was rigid, and rigor mortis doesn't set in any sooner than that. So it couldn't have been Davis who phoned the police. It must have been his killer—making an appointment with us for that time so we would be sure to pick up Snow Bailey, who it would then appear, had killed Davis when caught trying to steal dope.

"Now, here's a peculiarity of Bailey. He's what the dope heads call a 'main line shooter.' He puts the stuff directly into an artery, and used that way, it's dynamite. He'd be wild as a mad bull for a

while, but it wears off leaving him a worse wreck than it would taking it the other way.

"Whoever killed Davis figured Bailey would be so crazy he didn't know what happened. Bailey might even think he actually did kill Davis. But the stuff had worn off enough for Snow to talk, before he died. I think he was telling the truth, and the killer made a bad mistake."

"You've got a fine story, Tom," the inspector said. "Keep it up."

WHILE the doctor and the photographer were busy bringing up and photographing the corpse of the dead dopey and working in the dead doctor's apartment, Murphy left the room and found the superintendent of the building. That man was at his supper. Murphy showed his badge and explained his purpose. Seated across the small dining table from the man, Murphy questioned him.

"Who is the man who has an apartment here whose name is Pietro?"

The man filled a glass of wine for the detective and one for himself. "I don't know anybody by that name," he said, after a moment's thought. "Although I don't know the given names of all the tenants."

"The name sounds like he would be a Latin of some kind. Any Latins living in the house?"

"The man thought a moment. "Yes, I believe there is one. A man named Domingo Juarez on the fourth floor. Importer of chemicals, I think. A Porto Rican, or Cuban, maybe."

"Has he been here very long?"

"Two years."

"Know anything about him personally?"

"No. Except that he seems to have plenty of money, and he and his wife keep very much to themselves. Never have any callers."

The superintendent of the building was a mild little man with a thin scattering of dark hair, streaked with gray. He spoke in a low voice, hesitantly and slowly. Murphy noticed that he hissed his "esses."

"What's your name?" Murphy asked.

"Jones."

He hissed the "ess" in the pronunciation of his own name.

Murphy's eye lighted on a small framed document hanging on the wall. Recognizing it, he left the table and examined the paper.

"You own this house, eh?"

"Yes-s."

"Married?"

"Er-yes."

"I see. Thanks. And will you wait here a while? I might want you to identify somebody."

The man shifted nervously in his seat. "I wouldn't want any unpleasant notoriety for the house," he said. "There are empty apartments already—"

"Never mind," Murphy answered. "Wait here."

ON the fourth floor Murphy rang the bell marked "Juarez." The door was answered by a young woman whose beauty struck Murphy as being exceptional. Coal black hair and large raven eyes, her skin was milk white. Murphy removed his hat instinctively.

"Mrs. Juarez?" he asked.

The woman nodded suspiciously. Murphy started to walk in, but the woman held her position behind the slightly opened door.

"What is-s it?" she asked.

Murphy took his badge from his pocket and showed it to her. "Police," he explained.

Frightened, the woman allowed

him to enter, then took a chair opposite the one she offered him. She sat crumpling a handkerchief.

"I don't want to disturb you unnecessarily," Murphy explained. "But I'd like to talk to your husband," He found himself sorry for this woman.

"Iss no home."

"Where is he?"

THE woman had difficulty, or appeared to have difficulty in understanding him. He repeated each question.

"Oh. Is-s in Washington." Nervously, the woman arose from her chair and opened the drawer of a secretary. She handed Murphy a telegram.

"He send this from Washington. What is-s wrong?" Clearly the woman was agitated.

Murphy examined the message. It seemed genuine enough, and from what he could make of its contents with his slight knowledge of Spanish, it merely told of Domingo's safe arrival in Washington. It was dated at noon of this day.

Murphy did not answer the woman's question directly.

"When will he return?" he asked.

"He not say. I am s-so worry."

"Why?"

"You the police? I tell you. You no tell my husban'—never?"

Murphy nodded.

"My husban'—he so young. An' the man make him do things—I don't know—I think something very bad—wrong. You know?"

"What man?"

"Meester Jones-s. He own this house. An' he make like he maybe padre of Domingo—Domingo mus' do like he say. I'm so worry . . . ."

"I see. And tell me this, did you ever hear of a man named Pietro?"

"No. I think not," she answered evasively.

Murphy looked at the woman skeptically and asked her a few more questions, but her answers almost convinced him that he had learned all he could from her. It appeared to him that her husband told her very little of his business. Finally he left her after cautioning her not to talk to anybody and assuring her that he would work things out.

On the ground floor again, he knocked on the door of Jones' apartment but got no answer. After knocking twice without response he tried one of his ring of pass keys. One of them worked and he went in. At the moment the telephone in Jones' living room rang. Murphy stepped back and waited, concealed behind a portiere. Nobody answered. The phone jangled again, and after waiting a moment, Murphy crossed the room and lifted the receiver.

"Hello." came the voice at the other end—a feminine voice. "Is that Pietro?'

MURPHY thrilled with surprise and gratification. So Jones was Pietro—he was Spanish looking. This was luck. He hesitated a moment, then took a long chance.

"Yes-s," he answered, slurring the "ees" as well as he could in imitation of Jones' speech.

"How did things—ah—work out?" It was the girl, whispering a bit tremulously the question.

"All right," Murphy answered, hoping he was on the right track. "And how about you?"

"I've been in my apartment all evening," she said. I've been entertaining Doctor Davis, as you told me, and he left at seven-thirty. You came at eight and stayed until now. Now we're going out to the Everglades to dance. That's the story, right?—and I'm sticking to it. Are

(Continued on Page 118)

MAGIC CHEESE CHIPS

Coast-to-Coast Success!

POSITIVE PROOF OF UP TO $60 TO $300 A WEEK AT HOME

NO HOUSE-TO-HOUSE CANVASSING

Experience Unnecessary--No Costly Machine to Buy

The new coast-to-coast food hit. You work at home, chips come to you already made. Simply drop into hot grease and they're ready to eat! No complicated work, no experience, no failures! Positive proof of opportunity to make up to $30 *first day*. Distributors now making high as $60 to $300 a week clear! Not a machine. No need to buy special equipment. Stores do your selling for you. A phenomenal success! Sells faster than potato chips, do-nuts. Magic Cheese Chips are big, fluffy, giant-size chips bigger than potato chips. Irresisitible taste makes them act like an appetizer. The more you eat, the more you want to eat, and you never get filled up! It's a revelation! Nothing like it. Crowds, Maine to California devouring thousands of pounds weekly!

Pays Distributors Tremendous Profits

An enormous profit on small investment! Everyone likes this tasty tidbit any time of the day. 5 and 10 cent bags of Magic Cheese Chips sell like wildfire. Sales often run up to hundreds of dollars daily.

MEN, WOMEN EVERYWHERE Start at Scratch, Build Up to 1,000 Pound a Month Businesses

Men and women succeed alike—no super-salesmanship—no skill—no canvassing. E. Weiler, California, starts with 10 pounds, uses profits to build up to 30 pounds, then 60 pounds, then places standing order for 150 pounds EVERY THREE DAYS! ALL PAID FOR OUT OF PROFITS! One of the largest bakery chain systems in the U. S. bids for exclusive rights in 200 cities, but we had already allowed exclusive rights to others, except in 9 cities which they grab eagerly. Buy 150 pounds at a clip for each store! J. F. Knudson, living in a small New York city, wires, "RUSH ONE HUNDRED TWENTY POUNDS. OUR TRADE WILL REQUIRE UPWARD OF FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS MONTHLY." Large Pacific Coast concern wires, "INCREASE STANDING ORDER TO ONE HUNDRED FIFTY POUNDS WEEKLY. SHIP TODAY SURE THIRTY POUNDS ADDITIONAL EXPRESS." Long distance calls, telegrams flooding in from everywhere—we've had our plant working twenty-four hours a day to meet the demand! No hard times for MAGIC CHEESE CHIPS!

YOU DON'T INVEST A RED CENT

until you have sold yourself on the possibilities. You must sell yourself first before we permit you to invest, and our novel plan enables you to decide without cost! Then you can start with $8.50 investment, put back the enormous profits, building up without another penny investment if you wish!

EVERYTHING FURNISHED

We furnish everything—advertising, display stands, etc. Don't wait until it's too late to get the FIRST BIG PROFITS in *your* locality. Mail the coupon at once for complete details and share the enormous profits immediately!

FLUFF-O MFG. CO. Dept. U-5 St. Louis, Mo.

NEW NOW!

The Smash Hit of the day! The big fad at parties, outdoor games. People everywhere munching 'em on the streets! Takes instantly. Biggest food novelty boom in years!

VIRGIN TERRITORY EVERYWHERE

Hundreds of successful businesses now operating. Thousands of open territories. Hundreds of cities open—thousands of small towns. Immediate success possible anywhere. Write today.

SEND for ACTUAL PHOTO-COPIES of ORDERS from MAGIC CHIP DEALERS

Bonafide Proof of Profits!

See the actual orders with which men and women with small capital start, then see the orders they send out of profits! No claims. We let the facts speak for themselves. Look into this now while you have FIRST CHANCE at the profits in your locality. No obligation. Mail the coupon immediately—later may be too late.

MAIL FOR COMPLETE DETAILS

FLUFF-O MFG. CO.
Dept. U-5
St. Louis, Mo.

Without obligation to me, rush full information at once about Magic Cheese Chips and your proposition where I can make up to $60 to $300 a week at home.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

FOLLOW THIS MAN

Secret Service Operator No. 38 is on the job! Running down dangerous Counterfeit Gang. Telltale finger prints in murdered girl's room.

Free *The Confidential Report Operator No. 38 made to his chief. Write for it.*

$3000 a year and up

YOU can become a Finger Print Expert at home, in your spare time, at small cost. Write for confidential full report and details. Literature will NOT be sent to boys under 17 years of age.

INSTITUTE OF APPLIED SCIENCE
1920 Sunnyside Ave.
Dept. C-925 Chicago, Ill.

BRAND NEW TEAR GAS FOUNTIAN PEN

Fast Selling Sensation! Everyone buys this harmless, modern device which provides positive protection against criminals, morons, vicious dogs, etc. A one-minute demonstration brings orders from motorists, police departments, stores, banks and all classes of business.

It's Easy to Sell as high as two dozen daily. Large margin of profit enables you to make up to $400 per month. You take orders and collect your pay every day. Write now for exclusive territory. ATLAS CO., Chesterfield Station, Dept. 1608, Chicago, Ill.

MARRIED WOMEN'S SECRETS NOW
SEND 25¢ FOR TRIAL SIZE

Don't be discouraged or alarmed when nature fails you. You can now depend on our new O. J. O. RELIEF COMPOUND (a Perfodic Regulator) double strength. Often relieves unnatural irregularities, stubborn cases of long overdue delays, generally relieved very quickly. Absolutely safe, harmless. No inconvenience. Highly recommended and used by thousands of women for relief. We guarantee to ship orders same day received in plain wrapper, sealed. Send $2.00 box, double strength; 3 for $5.00. Triple strength, $5.00. Trial size 25c. Don't delay send order. FREE Booklet. A personal message to you.
O. J. O. MEDICAL CO., Dept. 221-F, 227 W. North Ave., Chicago

PILES DON'T BE CUT Until You Try This Wonderful Treatment

for pile suffering. If you have piles in any form write for a FREE sample of Page's Pile Tablets and you will bless the day that you read this. Write today. E. R. Page Co., 2306-B Page Bldg., Marshall, Mich.

For Real Pulse-Stirring Thrills, Read
THRILLING ADVENTURES
10c AT ALL NEWSSTANDS

CONTESTS

—offer profit chances. Know about all contests, rules, entry requirements, legal status, etc., through our weekly service. Only 10c a week, 12 weeks for $1, $4 a year. We sell all contest magazines and books on contest work. Subscribe for service NOW or ask for all information including details of service and the International Contest Ass'n., Inc.
CONTEST PUBLICITY COMPANY
Dept. 14 Deadwood, S. D.

Sleep Fine

Avoid Kidney Acidity

Thousands suffering and losing energy from Getting Up Nights, Backache, Stiffness, Leg Pains, Nervousness, Acidity or Burning, caused by poorly functioning Kidneys or Bladder, should use Cystex (pronounced Siss-tex) especially prepared for these troubles. Works fast, circulating through system in 15 minutes. Only 75c at druggists. Guaranteed to fix you up or money back on return of empty package.

you ready to meet me at the Everglades?"

"That's fine. You have a good memory," said Murphy, taking his cue from the astounding story he just heard. "Yes, I'll be there. And," this was a decided stab in the dark, "are you going to wear the new gown?"

"Yes," came the answer, "the ivory and my emeralds. The one you liked so well. I'll see you in the lobby of the Everglades. Hurry now or—"

Something whirred in the room and a sixth sense made Tom Murphy suddenly duck very low. Nevertheless, the sharp blade of a knife seared his shoulder and buried itself in the wainscoating of a door beside him.

He dropped the telephone receiver and whirled, his gun out of his pocket in split seconds and swinging in a wide arc.

Framed in a door across the room stood Jones, dressed in dinner clothes. The mild-mannered little man who had looked so insignificant now was a picture of boiling rage. His eyes glared fiercely and he stood crouched, his hand coming out of his pocket with a small black automatic.

"Hold it!" barked Murphy.

BUT the man was desperate. His gun came up and Murphy looked down its muzzle.

Murphy triggered his own gun from the hip. His bullet ripped the weapon from Jones' hand and tore up his arm, laying it wide open. Its force flung the little man slam against the door and floored him.

Murphy scudded across the room and picked up the weapon. He dragged the fuming little man to his feet and searched him for weapons.

"So you're the little boy that's been playing with dangerous weapons?" Murphy growled. "There's

apparently more to you than meets the eye."

"You haven't a thing to judge by," the man growled. "I thought you were a burglar, and I've got a right to defend my house against illegal entry."

"Where'd you get the name of Pietro?" Murphy asked.

"I never heard of such a name!"

KEEPING his gun trained on the man, Murphy called headquarters. "Send a man to pick up a woman wearing an ivory evening gown and emeralds. She'll come into the lobby of the Everglades night club. Have her brought down here right away.

"And now, Jones, we'll have a look around before we go upstairs."

In the bathroom Murphy found a bottle that interested him greatly. The label on it read, "Sulphuric acid."

He took the bottle along with him. Nothing else in the place was interesting to him for the moment.

"We'll come back later and give it a good shakedown," he promised Jones.

Sullenly, the man went with him upstairs, his arm bleeding profusely. Murphy carried the dagger that had so nearly cost him his life. He handled it by the blade, careful not to touch the handle.

They reached the apartment of the dead doctor and Murphy pushed his prisoner in before him. Inside the apartment, two forms lay on the floor, sheets covering them from head to foot. Doctor Davis and Bailey the dope fiend, were stretched side by side for the trip to the morgue. The doctor and the finger-print men were packing their gear, finished with their jobs.

Murphy asked the finger-print man to wait.

Inspector Flaherty looked from

(*Continued on Page* 120)

ANY PHOTO ENLARGED

Size 8x10 inches or smaller if desired. Same price for full length or bust form, groups, landscapes, pet animals, etc., or enlargements of any part of group picture. Safe return of original photo guaranteed. **47c**

SEND NO MONEY Just mail photo or snapshot (any size) and within a week you will receive your beautiful life-like enlargement, guaranteed fadeless. Pay postman 47c plus postage—or send 49c with order and we pay postage. Big 16x20-inch enlargement sent C. O. D. 78c plus postage or send 80c and we pay postage. Take advantage of this amazing offer now. Send your photos today. Specify size wanted.

Standard Art Studios, 903 W. Lake St., Dept. 393-K, Chicago, Ill.

SECRET SERVICE

We Want Men and Women of Average School Education, gifted with common sense, to study Secret Service and Scientific Crime Detection. If in this class and interested, write Joseph A. Kavanagh, Former Agent U. S. Secret Service, Director International Secret Service Institute, Dept. TD-83, 68 Hudson St., Hoboken, N. J.

Asthma Left Him Four Years Ago

"I had asthma for 40 years," writes Frank E. Mead, R. 3, Greene, N. Y., "and in that time tried about everything for it without success until I tried Nacor. Right then I started getting well. Four years ago, I felt able to get along without Nacor or any other medicine, and I've been free from asthma and in wonderful health ever since."

Find out how thousands have found lasting relief. Their letters and other vital information will be sent free. Write to Nacor Medicine Co., 626 State Life Bldg., Indianapolis, Ind.

Get the Low-Down on Modern Youth!

Read

COLLEGE LIFE

SNAPPY — BREEZY — PEPPY

100 Pages of America's Best Wit and Humor —Realistic, Fast-Moving Short Stories— COLLEGE LIFE is the last word in sophistication and the best quarter's worth on the stands today!

Don't Miss the Gala Spring Number!

A Baby In Your Home

Scientists now state that "Complete unity in life depends on sex harmony" and that the lack of it is the one greatest cause for unhappy marriages. Also that every woman "has the capacity for sex expression" but too often she is undeveloped or suffering with general female disorders, which rob her of her normal desires. During an experience of more than 35 years specializing in the treatment of diseases peculiar to women, I developed a simple home treatment which has brought new hope, health and happiness to many thousands. Many who had been childless for years become proud and happy Mothers. Husbands have written me the most glowing letters of gratitude and now I want every woman who is run-down or suffering from female disorders to learn about this splendid treatment, and how she may use it in the privacy of her own home.

Get This Knowledge FREE

In my two books "Full Development" and "A Baby In Your Home," I intimately discuss many important subjects relating to the female sex that are vitally interesting to every woman. They tell how you too may combat your troubles as thousands of others have and often again enjoy the desires and activities of Nature's most wonderful creation—a normal, fully developed vigorous woman. I will gladly send both books postpaid free. Write today. DR. H. WILL ELDERS, Suite 437-H 7th and Felix Streets, St. Joseph, Mo.

$1.90 29×4.40-21

NEW LOW PRICES
GOOD YEAR
Firestone · Goodrich
U. S. AND OTHERS
LOWEST PRICES ON EARTH

12 MONTH WRITTEN GUARANTY BOND WITH EACH TIRE

SERVE ON TIRES

FREE! TIRE GAUGE

WITH EACH ORDER FOR 2 TIRES TAKE-TIRE PRESSURE THRU SIDE WALL OF TIRE NO FUSS NO DIRT

TIRE USERS

by the thousands all over the U. S. A. vouch for the LONG, HARD SERVICE, under severest road conditions of our standard brand Tires reconstructed by the ORIGINAL SECRET YORK PROCESS. OUR 17 YEARS IN BUSINESS makes it possible to offer tires at LOWEST PRICES in history with 12 month guarantee.

Don't Delay — Order Today

BALLOON Tires

Size	Rim	Tires	Tubes
29x4.40	21	$1.90	$0.85
29x4.50	23	2.10	0.86
30x4.50	21	2.15	0.85
28x4.75	19	2.20	0.95
29x4.75	20	2.25	0.95
29x5.00	19	2.60	1.05
30x5.00	20	2.60	1.05
28x5.25	18	2.65	1.15
29x5.25	19	2.75	1.15
30x5.25	20	2.75	1.15
31x5.25	21	2.95	1.15
28x5.50	18	2.95	1.15
29x5.50	19	2.95	1.15
30x6.00	18	2.95	1.15
31x6.00	19	2.95	1.15
32x6.00	20	3.00	1.25
33x6.00	21	3.20	1.25
32x6.50	20	3.20	1.25

CORD Tires

Size	Tires	Tubes
30x3	$1.90	$0.65
30x3½	1.95	0.75
31x4	2.75	0.85
32x4	2.75	0.85
33x4	2.75	0.85
34x4	2.75	0.85
32x4½	2.95	1.15
33x4½	2.95	1.15
34x4½	2.95	1.15
30x5	3.25	1.85
32x5	3.25	1.45
35x5	3.50	1.55

All Other Sizes

DEALERS WANTED

SEND ONLY $1.00 DEPOSIT with each tire ordered. We ship — balance C. O. D. Deduct 5 per cent if cash in full accompanies order.

ALL TUBES BRAND NEW—GUARANTEED

Tires failing to give 12 months' service replaced at half price.

YORK TIRE & RUBBER CO., Dept. 631-A
3835-59 Cottage Grove Ave. Chicago, Ill.

Your Glands Wear Out

Try This New Gland Tonic—FREE

Science has now found a way of supplying the body with gland secretions which certain glands often fail to produce sufficiently and which are absolutely necessary for building health, strength and vitality. You can have *free proof*. Send for our wonderful GLAND TONIC—GOLDGLAN—and **Try it 20 Days ABSOLUTELY FREE—NO OBLIGATION**

This successful treatment has brought pep and strength to thousands of run-down, weak men and women. Should quickly do the same for *you!* NO LETTER NECESSARY. Just send this ad with your name and address and 10c for postage and packing. Complete treatment sent at once

Medical Aid Bureau, 529 S. La Salle St., Chicago. Dept. GA-510

NEW STUFF!

WINNIE WINKLE

For men only. Tillie & Mac, Toots & Casper, Boss & Bubbles, Fannie Hill, Only a Boy, Harold Teen & Liluns, Boob McNutt & Pearl, The Vampire, The End of Helen, What Tommy Saw Under the Parlor Door, Twelve Gay Love Letters Read Two Ways, Gay Life in Paris; also 50 Rare and Daring French type pictures. (Kind men like.) Also 50 Montmartre type pictures of beautiful girls in thrilling, snappy, artistic poses with their fellows. We fill orders the same day we receive them. All for only $1.00. Send cash, stamps or money order.

IMPERIAL NOVELTY CO.
175 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK CITY

LADIES ONLY!

For unnatural delay or irregularity use harmless B X MONTHLY TABLETS. Quick, painless relief even in many worst cases! Absolutely safe! No inconvenience or interference with duties! Used by thousands! Enthusiastic women report unbelievably prompt soothing, seemingly magical relief! Used by doctors! Guaranteed! Double Strength $2.00. Rushed 1st class mail, in plain sealed wrapper, within 1 hour of receipt of order.

B X LABORATORIES, 1515 E. 60th St., N-8, Chicago

High School Course in 2 Years

You can complete this simplified High School Course at home inside two years. Meets all requirements for entrance to college and the leading professions. This and thirty-six other practical courses are described in our Free Bulletin. Send for it TODAY.

AMERICAN SCHOOL, ©1934 A. S. CHICAGO
Dept. HC-50 Drexel Ave. & 58th

Murphy to his prisoner. "Who's this?" he asked.

"Says his name's Jones—with a soft 'ess.' Talks like he had a Spanish accent. Girl phoned him, and I answered—she called me Pietro, thinking I was him, I suppose. So I guess he's the boy who sent Snowy Bailey up to rob Davis. Which, as I figure it, would make him the one who actually did the killing. Anyway, we've got the knife in Davis' back and this one he tried to carve me with. There ought to be fingerprints for you here, Joe," he said, handing the weapon to the fingerprint man. "Look 'em over, eh?"

"You want to talk?" the inspector asked.

"Sure I do," Jones answered. "I want to say this is an outrage, a bloody outrage! And I'll have my lawyer—"

FLAHERTY studied the prisoner with renewed and concentrated interest.

"'A bloody outrage eh?" he repeated. *"Bloody?* A man with a Spanish name who uses Cockney slang when he gets excited? Oh, yes. I know you now. That would make you Pete Costello. Sure glad to locate you, Pete. Mighty glad. Been looking for you a long time."

"You're all wrong," the man growled. "I never heard—"

"I'll tell you, then," Flaherty interrupted. "You were born in London, served time in three British prisons for dope activity, escaped, was trailed to Spain. Served a hitch there, went to Cuba, and started running dope up to the States. Then you disappeared, but the government has an idea you're somewhere around here, directing dope activities in a big way. And sure enough, here you are."

Nursing his wounded arm, the man threw off all mask of respectability. "That don't mean anything," he snarled. "You haven't got anything

on me. I'm not the bird you're talking about. I never heard of this Pete—"

Somebody knocked on the outer door and the uniformed officer on guard opened it.

Two plainclothes men came in escorting a young woman in an ivory evening gown.

The woman got one look at the prisoner and gasped. "Pietro!" She started toward the man. The prisoner turned his back on her as though he had never seen her before, but the two officers held her back.

"So you're not Pete?" Murphy asked.

"That doesn't prove I killed this man. I've been in my apartment ever since six oclock. I've had telephone calls that will prove it. I don't know this dead doctor."

"Who said the body under that sheet was that of the doctor?" Murphy shot at him. "I didn't tell you who was dead!"

The prisoner grumbled something inaudible. Then as an afterthought added, "Why don't you get that Spaniard on the fourth floor? I heard him threaten to kill the doctor."

The woman in the ivory gown spoke up. "No you don't! You won't accuse that boy of killing him. I'll tell everything first!"

ALMOST hysterically, she turned to the officers. "Don't believe him. That boy was in his grasp, borrowed money from him, and Costello used him for some purpose. But the boy is all right. He's clean except for the contact he had with Costello.

"Costello killed Davis because he hated him. He hated him because Davis was blackmailing him and making him furnish him dope to sell to his woman patients. Davis was taking all Costello's money

(*Concluded on Page* 122)

Stopped His Whiskey Drinking

The Happy Reunion

Try It FREE

Wives, mothers, sisters, it is you that the man who drinks Whiskey, Wine or Beer to excess must depend upon to help save him from a ruined life and a drunkard's grave. Take heed from the thousands of men going to ruin daily through vile bootlegger's Whiskey, and the horrible stuff called home brew from private stills. Once he gets it in his system he finds it difficult to stop—but you can help him. What it has done for others is an example of what it should do for you. All you have to do is to send your name and address and we will send absolutely FREE, in plain wrapper, a trial package of GOLDEN TREATMENT. You will be thankful as long as you live that you did it. Address

DR. J. W. HAINES CO.
217 Glenn Building Cincinnati, Ohio

LONESOME?

Let me arrange a romantic correspondence for you. Find yourself a sweetheart thru America's foremost select social correspondence club. A friendship letter society for lonely ladies and gentlemen. Members everywhere; CONFIDENTIAL introductions by letter; efficient, dignified and continuous service. I have made thousands of lonely people happy—why not you? Write for FREE sealed particulars.
EVAN MOORE BOX 903 JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

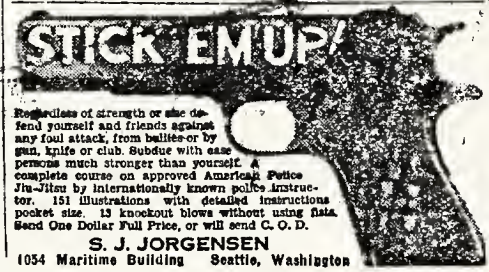
A BABY FOR YOU?

If you are denied the blessing of a baby all your own and yearn for a baby's arms and a baby's smile, do not give up hope. Just write in confidence to Mrs. Mildred Owens, 1189 Coates House, Kansas City Mo., and she will tell you about a simple home method that helped her after being denied 15 yrs. Many others say this has helped bless their lives. Write now and try this wonderful happiness.

SINUS PAIN

I suffered untold misery from Sinus trouble for seven years. Every method known was tried to clear me up: I changed climate three times, had two operations, used special electric appliances, but all failed. Then I located a wonderful treatment, and now my head is clear as a bell. No more 12-hour headaches. No more sleepless nights. I am never bothered a single moment. Write me and I'll gladly tell you how I succeeded in curbing my Sinus misery.

CLARA ROSS, Inc.
3141 Magnolia, Apt. V-6. St. Louis, Mo.



Regardless of strength or size defend yourself and friends against any foul attack, from bullies or by gun, knife or club. Subdue with ease persons much stronger than yourself. A complete course on approved American Police Jiu-Jitsu by internationally known police instructor. 151 illustrations with detailed instructions pocket size. 13 knockout blows without using fists. Send One Dollar Full Price, or will send C. O. D.

S. J. JORGENSEN
1054 Maritime Building Seattle, Washington

BIG HUSKY MUSCLES ONLY $2.75

Smashing Bargain! Send No Money!

You save over half on this big home Gym outfit and amazing course of Physical Culture. Husky 10-Cable Exerciser adjustable to 200 lbs. resistance. Wall Apparatus for Back and Shoulder development. Hand Grip for husky wrists and forearms. Regulation Heavy Skip Rope. Head Gear. Foot Stirrup and Harness, the Great Shadow Boxer. Novel Rowing parts complete Course of instructions "How to Box," "How to Get Strong," "For Men Only." All This—For Only $2.75. Act quickly before offer expires. Send your name and address. We'll ship everything out by return mail. Pay postman only $2.75 plus postal charges. Outside U. S. cash with order.

HERCULES EXERCISER CO.
17 East 22nd St.
Dept. E-40, New York, N. Y.

LOVE CULTS

A warning to all young girls in the most sensational book of the twentieth century—a TRUE story of exotic, unbelievable orgies—a startling expose of get-acquainted clubs and strange and weird love societies—

The Most Daring, Frankest Book Ever Written!

Get the only work which tells the bare facts about woman's love-life, adultery, sex and nature, free love, the badger game, drug cults, Hindu love beliefs, the dance hall menace and the fruit of illicit love—

MY LIFE IN A LOVE CULT
By the High Priestess of Oom

NOW 50c

Fourteen big chapters—one hundred pages—size 9 in. by 12. Cash U. S. stamps or Postal Money Orders accepted.

Mailed in Plain Wrapper
Postage Prepaid.

BETTER PUBLICATIONS, Inc.
Dept. D-8, 570—7th Ave., New York City.

I enclose 50c. Please rush my copy of MY LIFE IN A LOVE CULT to

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State .....

(No orders filled in Canada. 80c foreign.)

away from him slowly and becoming stronger than Costello.

"I've known it all along, but I couldn't do anything. Costello has had me in his power for years. I have to have the stuff he sells and I can't get it unless I do what he wants. That's why I had to build up his alibi for him. But I'm through. I'll tell you if it kills me. I'm through. I'll tell the court everything I told you—and more, too. But he won't drag that Spanish boy and girl down like he did me."

Costello, standing between the two men guarding him, suddenly lunged forward. A string of sulphurous Spanish oaths poured from him.

"Sure I killed the rat," he roared. "And I'd do it again. He was making a play for that little Juarez woman—and he was trying to beat me to her. I'd have taken her away from Juarez if he hadn't butted in with his warning—"

But Costello was talking to cover a movement. Suddenly he jerked his good arm free of the officer. His hand darted into his breast pocket and came out with a tiny vial. He clapped it to his mouth and chewed on it.

Murphy saw the act and hit him squarely in the jaw with a massive fist.

The man tumbled like a load of brick.

"Wash that chewed glass out of his mouth," Murphy said to the doctor. "He didn't have time to swallow any of the poison. We'll keep him alive until the state's ready for him to die."

He turned to Flaherty. "And now, if that's all, Dan, I'll run on. I had an eight o'clock dinner date!"

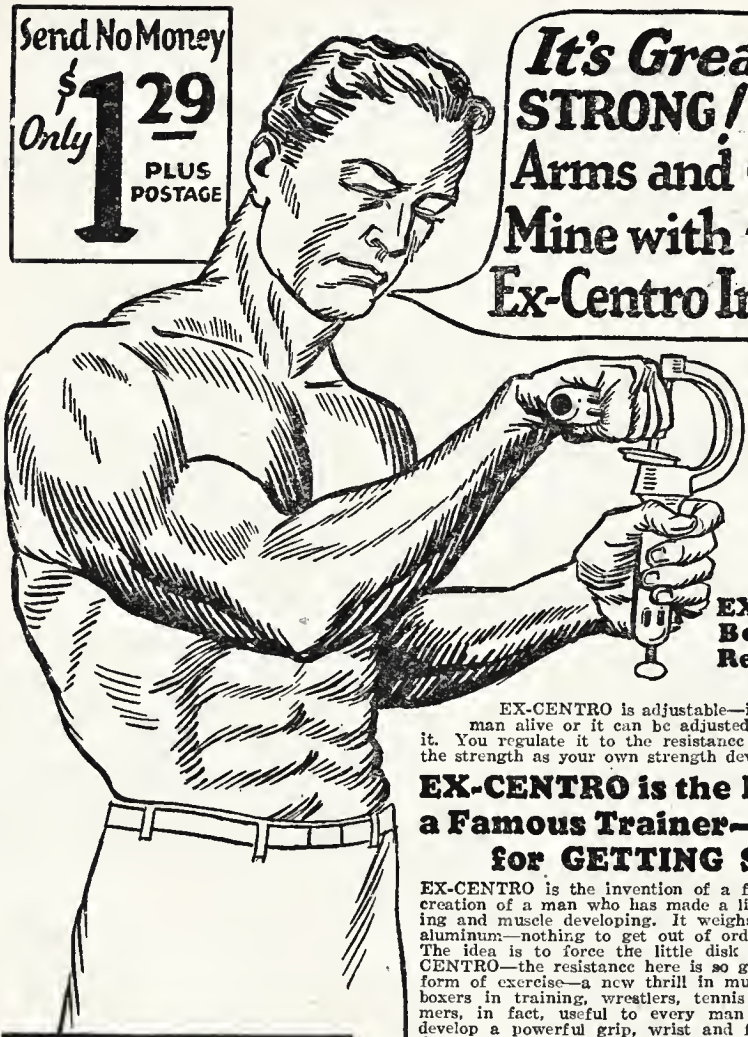
FOR MARRIED WOMEN ONLY

Don't be discouraged or alarmed when nature fails you. You can now depend on our new S. P. Relief Compound (a Periodic Regulator). Double Strength often relieves unnatural irregularities, stubborn cases of long overdue delays generally relieved very quickly. Absolutely safe. Harmless. No inconvenience. Highly praised and used by thousands of women. We guarantee to ship your order same day received, in plain wrapper. Send $2 box (single strength), $3 for Double Strength, 2 for $5. A Valuable Hygiene Booklet Free
Snyder Prod. Co., 227 W. North Av., Dt. 94-K Chicago

Send No Money

Only $1.29 PLUS POSTAGE

It's Great to be STRONG! Develop Arms and Grip like Mine with this New Ex-Centro Invention



EX-CENTRO weighs only One Pound

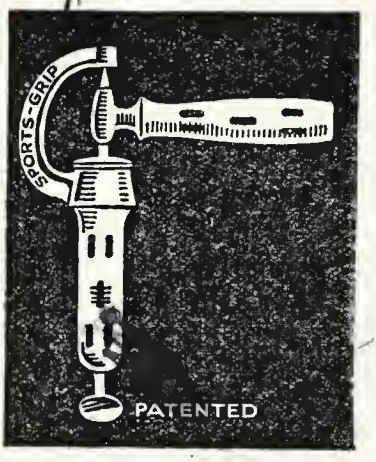
EX-CENTRO is a herculean one pound giant. You will be amazed at the work out and the fight EX-CENTRO gives you and how quickly it develops a powerful grip, wrist and arm.

EX-CENTRO Can Be Adjusted To Resist Strongest Man Alive

EX-CENTRO is adjustable—it can resist the strongest man alive or it can be adjusted so that a child can use it. You regulate it to the resistance you desire and increase the strength as your own strength develops.

EX-CENTRO is the Invention of a Famous Trainer—A Necessity for GETTING STRONG

EX-CENTRO is the invention of a famous trainer—it is the creation of a man who has made a life's study of body building and muscle developing. It weighs but a pound—made of aluminum—nothing to get out of order. Will last a lifetime. The idea is to force the little disk into the center of EX-CENTRO—the resistance here is so great that you get a new form of exercise—a new thrill in muscle building. Great for boxers in training, wrestlers, tennis players, golfers, swimmers, in fact, useful to every man or woman wanting to develop a powerful grip, wrist and forearm. While you are developing these muscles, you also develop the chest and shoulder muscles, because every part of the upper body is brought into play while you are trying to conquer EX-CENTRO. It's amusing and entertaining. You will get a big kick out of trying to lick it—your friends will gather around and everyone will want to try it. Be the first to enjoy the great benefits of this new marvelous muscle building invention.



Send No Money

EX-CENTRO is sold with an absolute guarantee of satisfaction or money back. You take no risk whatsoever. All you do is send the coupon—no money now. We ship by return mail. You deposit $1.29, plus postage, with postman on arrival. Clip and mail coupon today—NOW!

EX-CENTRO, Inc.
Dept. 408
120 W. 42 St., N. Y.

EX-CENTRO, Inc., Dept. 408
120 West 42 St., New York, N. Y.

☐ Send 1 EX-CENTRO, with full instructions, by return mail. I will pay postman $1.29, plus postage on arrival. It is understood if I am not fully satisfied I may return after 5 days trial and you will refund my $1.29.

☐ Enclosed find post office money order for $1.29. You are to send Ex-Centro by return prepaid mail. I save the postage.

Name.....

Street.....

City..... State.....

NOTE: If you live outside of the U. S. A. send $1.50 with order.

HEADQUARTERS

WHERE READERS, WRITERS, AND THE EDITOR MEET

WHEN Sheriff Daine heard the voice over the wire his jaw dropped open — and stayed open. Then suddenly he was keen, alert, tense—every nerve in his body vibrating to the ominous message.

The message consisted of one word—one word repeated with terrible insistence! One violent word, each syllable dripping with an unspeakable horror, a consuming anguish of body and soul. It came over the wire again and again with a gurgling gasp of blood.

"Murder! Murder! Murder!"

And Daine was off in his exciting chase—his thrilling pursuit of the murderer of Hangman's Island.

Follow him on this amazing trail of crime in MURDER ON HANGMAN'S ISLAND, by G. Wayman Jones, a complete book-length novel which will be featured in next month's THRILLING DETECTIVE.

A novel full of action, mystery and suspense that will keep you guessing with bated breath from the first page to the last!

Here you will have G. Wayman Jones at his best—and those of you who have read the ALIAS MR. DEATH series and THE OFFICE MURDERS know what that means!

You'll like Sheriff Daine—he'll take his place among your favorite fiction detectives when you read MURDER ON HANGMAN'S ISLAND and are astonished by his astute solution of a seemingly impenetrable mystery. And you'll thrill to his quick-witted resourcefulness in action.

Page after page—chapter after chapter—and right up to its smashing conclusion — MURDER ON HANGMAN'S ISLAND will hold you in a vise-like grip of breathtaking interest.

It's *the* story that you can't afford to miss!

And there will be other high spots in the gala September issue, too.

THE GREEN BOTTLE, by Barry Brandon, will be another fast-action story of The Speed Demon, that remarkable detective who never carries weapons of any kind—but is always ready to meet a foe, relying on his brains and brawn. Ed King, the Speed Demon, is certainly going over big! A stack of letters from enthusiastic readers prove it.

Perley Poore Sheehan presents another swift-moving, exciting Doctor Coffin story, SMALL TOWN STUFF. Doctor Coffin is now fighting rackets of all kinds—and he tackles one of the toughest problems of his career in SMALL TOWN STUFF, a complete novelette.

A daring murder right under the bright lights of the world's gayest street is perpetrated in DEATH ON BROADWAY, by Joseph Ivers Lawrence, another complete novelette in next month's issue.

There's a thrill in every line of DEATH ON BROADWAY—a startling mystery chock full of ac-

What Will You Do With $3500.00 *cash*

If I Give it to YOU?

I'LL PAY $250.00

Just for the winning answer to this question

I am going to give $3,500.00 to some deserving man or woman who answers my announcements. *You may be the one to get it!* But, before I give it to anyone I would like to know that the money will be used wisely. *What will you do with this fortune if I give it to you?* Just answer this question—tell me in a sentence of 20 words or less what you would do with the $3,500.00—*nothing more to do toward the $250.00 cash prize!* Sounds easy? It is easy! Nothing "fancy" is needed—just tell me in plain words what you would do with the $3,500.00.

20 Simple Words Win $250.00

Nothing more for you to do! Costs nothing to win—nothing to buy—no selling. This $250.00 Prize given just for an answer to my question.

There is no way you can lose. Simply tell me what YOU will do with $3,500.00 if I give it to you. The prize for the winning answer is $250.00. Just sending an answer qualifies you for an opportunity to win $3,500.00 in final prize distribution. Think what an amazing opportunity—why, many people work hard for a life-time without ever having such a vast amount of money as you may now win.

RULES:—Only one answer accepted from a family. You must be over 16 years of age and reside within Continental U. S. $250.00 given for best answer to "What Will You Do With $3,500.00 If I Give It to You?" Answers must be postmarked not later than Sept. 16, 1933. Judges will consider answer only for practical value of the idea. Construction, spelling, and neatness not considered.

Just Sending Answer Qualifies You for Opportunity to

WIN $3,500.00

Some say I am wrong. They say that the people who get money from me will spend it foolishly. Now I want to find out. I am going to give away over $6,000.00. Someone is going to get $3,500.00 All Cash. If I gave you the $3,500.00 what would YOU do with it? Tell me in 20 words or less. Think, NOW, How You Would Spend $3,500.00! Would you start a business—invest in bonds—pay off a mortgage, or buy new furniture? Just sending an answer qualifies you for the opportunity to win $3,500.00. If you are prompt I'll send you a $1,000.00 Cash Certificate AT ONCE! Here is an opportunity of a lifetime. Rush your answer today. Yours may be a winner.

TOM WOOD, Manager
Dept. W-704-F, H-O Bldg., Cincinnati, O.

BE PROMPT! . . . I Will Send You $1,000.00 Cash Certificate AT ONCE! One thousand dollars EXTRA if you are prompt and win first prize in final distribution. So don't delay. Every person who takes an active part will be rewarded in cash . . . Write your answer and rush it to me. Use coupon and send in letter or on one-cent post card. **Send no money.** I will send you $1,000.00 Cash Certificate at once.

YOUR PRIZE COUPON

TOM WOOD, Manager.
H-O Bldg., Dept. W- 704-F, Cincinnati, Ohio.
If you give me the $3,500.00 prize, I will use it as follows:
(Write your answer plainly in here, in 20 words or less)

.....

.....

.....

.....

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

TOWN..... STATE.....

Rupture No Longer Spoils My Fun

"Now that I am rid of my rupture and do not wear a truss, I enjoy dancing again. Many strenuous activities are pleasures, because I am not handicapped in any way. My work is no longer a task—I enjoy it. No one would ever believe I was crippled by rupture."

This is the way people write us after ridding themselves of rupture by using STUART'S ADHESIF PLAPAO-PADS.

Stacks of sworn endorsements report success—without delay from work.

Plapao-Pads cling to the body without straps, buckles or springs. Easy to apply—economical and comfortable.

Convince yourself by actually testing Plapao at our expense. Send coupon today.

Test of Factor "PLAPAO"

FREE! ACT SPEEDILY

MAIL COUPON BELOW TO-DAY

Plapao Laboratories, Inc.
861 Stuart Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

Send me FREE Trial Plapao and 48-page book on Rupture. No charge for this now or later.

Name .....

Address .....

NEW LOW PRICE TIRES!

Look!
GOODYEAR
GOODRICH, FIRESTONE

Chicago's most reliable firm will save you ½ on STANDARD BRAND TIRES. Factory inspected, wrapped and labeled, reconstructed with Imperial's new discovery process, and protected by our WRITTEN GUARANTEE BOND for 12 months' service or replaced at half price. Tests over roughest road at high speeds prove their worth. Thousands of satisfied users. ORDER NOW. Be convinced.

FREE NEW TUBE with order for 2 TIRES

BALLOON TIRES Size	Rim	Tires	Tubes	CORD TIRES Size	Tires	Tubes
29x4.40	21	$1.90	$0.75	30x3	$1.90	$0.60
29x4.50	20	2.10	.75	30x3½	1.95	.70
30x4.50	21	2.15	.75	31x4	2.75	.80
28x4.75	19	2.20	.85	32x4	2.75	.80
29x4.75	20	2.25	.85	33x4	2.75	.80
29x5.00	19	2.40	.95	34x4	2.75	.80
30x5.00	20	2.60	.95	32x4½	2.95	.90
28x5.25	19	2.65	.95	33x4½	2.95	.90
29x5.25	19	2.65	.95	34x4½	2.95	.90
30x5.25	20	2.75	.96	36x5	3.25	1.25
31x5.25	21	2.75	.96	33x5	3.25	1.25
28x5.50	19	2.75	1.05	35x5	3.50	1.25
30x5.00	18	2.95	1.05	All Other Sizes		
31x5.00	19	2.95	1.05	DEALERS		
32x5.00	20	3.00	1.05	WANTED		
33x5.00	21	3.00	1.05			
32x5.50	20	3.20	1.20			

GUARANTEED 12 MONTHS

Free Tube with 2 TIRES

TUBES BRAND NEW—GUARANTEED

Send $1.00 deposit on each tire ordered; pay balance C. O. D. Or send Cash in full and deduct 5 per cent. ORDER TODAY.

IMPERIAL TIRE & RUBBER CO., Dept. 52
5339-41 Wentworth Avenue, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

tion and suspense. Don't miss it.

Besides, several other unusual detective yarns—both by your favorites and other well-known writers who are new to THRILLING DETECTIVE, but known wherever detective stories are read.

Ray Thomas, of Denver, Col., has this to say of THRILLING DETECTIVE:

> A month is a long time to wait for an issue, but the stories in THRILLING DETECTIVE make up for it.
>
> Referring to your June number, MURDER AT THE ALTAR was a winner. I also liked THE TARGET MURDERS—one of the most unusual stories I ever read. I'd like to read another story of murder in the army—I think this is a fertile field for some darn good yarns.

James Weldon Wright, of Pensacola, Fla., writes the following:

> You can't keep Doctor Coffin down! Here he is in Hollywood—and MIDNIGHT JUSTICE is one of the most exciting stories of crime I ever read. Why can't you get Doctor Coffin to go after those behind today's profitable but dishonest rackets?

A good suggestion, old man, and we're way ahead of you—because that's just what the Doc is doing right now.

Here's part of a welcome missive from Harrison Maltby, of New York:

> I like your stories because they are as real as life itself—that is, they catch the spirit of things just as they are. Your cops are real cops and your crooks are real crooks—a rare thing in a detective magazine, and I have read many. Your writers evidently know what they are talking about, and are not just filling so many pages.
>
> Take the story COP KILLERS, by Anatole Feldman—why, it rings so true, I could almost believe that I saw the whole thing happen myself.

That's great! That's just the sort of thing we like to hear! And how about the rest of you—come on, now, shoot in your letters and postcards to me right away! I'm waiting for 'em with open arms!

—HARVEY BURNS.

Send for FREE information telling how Revolutionary Invention makes it easy to correct Nearsight, Farsight, Astigmatism Eyestrain, Weak Eyes, Failing Vision, Old Age Sight, Eye Muscle Trouble, Etc., at home without glasses.

NATURAL EYESIGHT INSTITUTE, Inc.
Dept. 36-D Santa Monica, Calif.

HOME-STUDY BUSINESS TRAINING

Your opportunity can never be bigger than your preparation. Prepare now and reap the rewards in earlier and larger success. *Free 64-Page Books Tell How.* Write *now* for book you want, or mail coupon with your name and address in margin *today.*

- O Higher Accountancy
- O Mod. Salesmanship
- O Traffic Management
- O Law: Degree of LL.B.
- O Commercial Law
- O Industrial Mgm't
- O Banking and Finance
- O Telegraphy
- O Rail. Station Mgm't
- O Railway Accounting
- O Paper Salesmanship
- O Business Mgm't
- O Business Corres.
- O Credit and Collection Correspondence
- O Modern Foremanship
- O Personnel Mgm't
- O Expert Bookkeeping
- O C. P. A. Coaching
- O Business English
- O Commercial Spanish
- O Effective Speaking

LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY
Dept. K-53 Chicago

Men! No Need to Lose Natural Powers After 35!

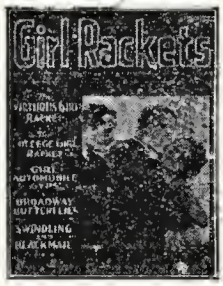
Regain Lost Vitality This Easy Way!

For Pep Vitality Natural Powers

WHY suffer from premature loss of Pep, Vigor and Youthful Energy any longer? Why be depressed by this annoying problem when you can so easily regain lost Natural Powers? Thousands of men have found the answer in DORAL VIGOR TABS! You, too, can help yourself to helpful vigor with this amazing scientific Glandular aid. DORAL VIGOR TABS are recommended by physicians as safe, positive and beneficial, with long lasting results. This is your opportunity to regain the vigor of real young manhood. Send for DORAL VIGOR TABS today. Regular Large size box (50 time treatment) only $1.95. THREE BOXES $5.00. SUPER-STRENGTH only $2.95. TWO BOXES $5.00. Send Cash or Money Order. C. O. D. 15c extra. ORDER NOW!

DORAL LABORATORIES, Dept. H-12, 303 West 42nd St., New York City

LATEST GIRL RACKETS EXPOSED!



Here are true stories of gold-diggers—a sensational expose of today's conditions that will astound you—things you never knew before about the women whose motto is: "Never Give a Sucker an Even Break."
Get the real inside story of many famous scandals—this book teems with startling facts never before divulged! Fascinating, shocking reading! For the low-down on feminine racketeers, read—

"GIRL RACKETS"

By Virginia Hudson Brightman

Former Police Reporter in Chicago, New York and Boston. Author of "What Happens to Innocent Girls," "How Girls Go Wrong," etc.

This Book Includes an Up-to-Date Dictionary of Broadway Slanguage Used by Girl Racketeers.

PARTIAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I
LADIES MUST LIVE—HOW DO THEY GET THAT WAY—AND WHY? THEY EVEN DO IT IN OLD JAPAN

CHAPTER II
THE VIRTUOUS GIRL RACKET—AN EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF GHASTE AND UNCHASTE GIRLS WHO WORK MEN FOR ALL THEY'RE WORTH

CHAPTER III
THE LOVE RACKETEERS—THE "MARRY 'EM AND MAKE 'EM—PAY" RACKET IS AS OLD AS HISTORY AND ALWAYS GETS THEM.

CHAPTER IV
THE GOLD-DIGGER—THE BROADWAY BUTTERFLY—GIRLS WHO "NEVER GIVE A SUCKER AN EVEN BREAK."

CHAPTER V
GIRL AUTOMOBILE GYPS—GIRLS WHO ASK FOR A HITCH—WITH STRANGE CONSEQUENCES—AND THE GAMBLING RACKET

CHAPTER VI
THE NOBILITY RACKET—THE BIGGEST MONEY PRIZES GO TO THE BRAINY TYPES—THE MOST DANGEROUS OF ALL

CHAPTER VII
GREEP JANE'S PROGRESS—WHAT HAPPENS TO THE GIRLS WHOSE RACKETEERING IS AT FIRST CONFINED TO BAGGING FREE MEALS.

CHAPTER VIII
SWINDLING AND BLAGKMAIL—SENSATIONAL STORIES OF VULTURES IN HUMAN FORM WHO PREY ON THE EMOTIONS OF INNOGENT VICTIMS.

CHAPTER IX
JUST DOWN FROM COLLEGE—A GOLLEGIATE MANNER. AN AIR OF NONCHALANGE AND PLENTY OF NERVE ARE THE STOGK-IN-TRAGE OF CERTAIN UNSGRUPULOUS RACKETEERS

[CASH, U. S. STAMPS, EXPRESS OR POSTAL MONEY ORDERS ACCEPTED]

Mailed in Plain Wrapper. Postage Prepaid.
BETTER PUBLICATIONS, Inc.
Dept. TD-8, 570 7th Ave., New York City
I enclose 25c. Please rush my copy of GIRL RACKETS to

Name .....

Address .....

City..... State.....

[No Orders Filled in Canada. 40c Foreign.]

A $2.50 Book for

25c

SPECIAL VALUE

9 ASTONISHING CHAPTERS PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED AND AN UP-TO-DATE SLANG DICTIONARY

Page Size 9" × 12"

STOMACH DISORDERS THREATEN HIS LIFE SAYS N. Y. PATROLMAN

"I tried everything," says Officer David R. Caldwell, 2309 Holland Ave., New York City. "I suffered from gas in the stomach and heartburn so bad that I could hardly stand it. My case was diagnosed by one doctor as ulcers, another said I had gall stones. One went so far as to tell my wife that I had cancer and had only a short time to live. I suffered much agony and lost weight until one day I saw an advertisement in the New York Daily News, by the Udga Co., St. Paul, Minn. I wrote for their treatment and thanks be to God I did, for today I am a different man. I have no pain, can eat anything and I am getting back to my normal weight."

DAVID R. CALDWELL

Acid Stomach Afflicts Millions

Hyperacidity (acid stomach) is, as every physician can tell you, the curse of millions. It is the most common cause of stomach or gastric ulcers as well as many other distressing conditions and there are comparatively few adults who can truly say it has never troubled them. **In addition to stomach ulcers, acid stomach is often the direct cause of gas pains, dyspepsia, poor digestion, pains after eating, bloating, belching, gnawing pains, heartburn, gastritis, sour stomach, constipation, etc.**

Double Acting Treatment Needed

To combat these conditions you need a treatment that will first counteract or neutralize the excess acid secretions and then protect, soothe and tone the membranes or stomach lining in order that the process of healing may take place. This is the function of the Udga Treatment and the excellent results it has produced in so many thousands of cases are due to this double acting feature.

Offered on 15 Days' Trial

And now that the merits of this splendid treatment have been so conclusively proved, the distributors invite all sufferers to try it at their risk and are willing to send a full 15 DAY TREATMENT ON TRIAL. So if you can believe what your own stomach tells you—if you agree that freedom from stomach pains, distress and misery are the surest proof of results, accept this liberal trial offer and see for yourself what the Udga Treatment can do for your sick stomach.

Clip and Mail Now

UDGA, Inc., 1829 Foot-Schultz Bldg., St. Paul, Minnesota.
Please send me your 15 DAY TRIAL OFFER on the Udga Treatment. Also free copy of your book on stomach troubles, testimonials, affidavit of genuineness and $1,000.00 Reward Offer to back it up. This does not obligate me in any way.

Name

No. and Street

City State

THE MURDER TRAIL

(*Concluded from Page* 104)

clothes and with the news of Tim's death knocking me off my feet I'd never have suspected him."

"He put up quite a fight, didn't he?"

"It was the craziest fight I ever saw," the officer answered. "You know, he ran across the street into that wax-works show where they got those life-size wax figures of people. Well, he hid in the chamber of horrors place and we cornered him in that replica of the Sing Sing death house. He'd left a trail of figures he'd smashed and shot.

"When we smoked him out he came a-shooting, but he couldn't tell us from the rest of the figures and—well, we had to cut him down. Them punks never use their heads."

"The old town would be pretty dangerous if they did," the reporter yawned. "I won't even go up to see him burn. Dull copy, those punks."

ANSWER TO

THE LOG CABIN MYSTERY

(*See page* 94)

Detective Dunn could not understand why Knox had written his dying message in French. At such a time, one would have used his native tongue. The state of the wounds, the still sticky blood in the case of Adams, and the coagulated blood from Knox's wound, contradicted the scrawled message. It meant that Adams had committed suicide before Knox was stabbed.

Where was the murder weapon? It had been hidden by Leroy, who had arranged Knox's body, and who had guided the fingers of the dead man to write the accusing message against Adams—planned from the angle of the Canadian police who were to read it.

Leroy thought he was covered. Hence his poor alibi, and his snatching up a sketch with much blue in it, and a paint box with no blue, to prove he had been painting.

The newspaper clipping gave a clue as to the motive. These three were involved in the bank robbery; they had been lying low and posing as artists. Adams, the youngest and the only artist of the three, broke under the strain. The activities of the police drove him to suicide. Leroy had then but one to share the loot with, and this prompted him to get rid of Knox to keep the entire sum.

BOYS! THROW YOUR VOICE

Into a trunk, under the bed or anywhere. Lots of fun fooling teacher, policeman or friends.

THE VENTRILO

a little instrument, fits in the mouth out of sight, used with above for Bird Calls, etc. Anyone can use it. Never fails. A 16-page course on Ventriloquism, the Ventrilo and novelty catalog. All for 10c.

BOY AMATEUR ELECTRICIAN 10c

The HOW and WHY of electricity fully told in simple language that any boy can understand. Scores of plans and instructions for making—dry batteries, dynamos, electric motors, telegraph apparatus, telephones, electric lights, electric door bells, alarms, electric engine, rheostat, mail box alarm, electro-magnets, automatic incandescent flash, electric stocking machine, wireless telegraph apparatus, induction coil, arc light, current meter, etc., etc. Tells all about electric wiring, static electricity, measuring and magnetism, conductors and insulators, electrostatic induction, electroscope, electrophorus, condensers, Leyden jar, dynamic electricity, the voltaic cell, electromagnets, electrolysis, electro-plating, electrotyping; how to build a room for a boy, gents, etc. 56 pages. 100 Illustrations. 10c. postpaid. JOHNSON SMITH & CO., Dept. 926 Racine, Wis.

BIG ENTERTAINER 15c

180 Jokes and Riddles. 34 Magic Tricks, 54 Parlor Games. 73 Toasts. 15 Tricks with Cards. 50 Money-making Secrets. 10 Funny Readings. 3 Monologues. 21 Puzzles and Problems. 5 Comic Recitations. Cut-outs for Chankers and Chess, Domioces, Fox and Geese, 9 Men Morris, Spanish Prison Puzzle, Game of Anagrams, etc. All for 15c postpaid.

ONLY 10c Per Pair

Fighting Roosters

With very little practice you can make them Miniature models of Game Roosters imitate in the most life-like manner the evolutions of a FIRCE COCK-of-the-WALK. Endless amusement. Well made, with real feathers. Pair 10c. 3 pra. 25c. postpaid.

GOOD LUCK RING

Very striking, unique and uncommon. Silver finish; solid and ornamental design; two brilliant, dashing eyes sparkle out of the eyes. Said to bring good luck to the owner. A genuine work of art. Must be seen to be appreciated. Make good money wearing them or friends, church acquaintances, etc. PRICE 15c each, 3 for 40c, 12 for $1.25, 100 for $7.50. Also obtainable in Sterling Silver, with gold eyes. Price 50c each, 3 for $1.25, $4.50 per doz. Magnifying Glass for use with Midget Bible 35c

PLAY PIANO IN ONE HOUR

With this new YAMPING BOARD. No teacher needed. Surprisingly simple. Place the Yamping Board upright over the piano keys, and sweep away to thousands of songs, ballads, waltzes, fox trots, ragtime, etc. No knowledge of music required. After using a few times, the Board may be dispensed with entirely. Price 15c Postpaid

MIDGET BIBLE

GREAT CURIOSITY! Smallest Bible in the World. Size of a postage stamp. Only 1/4 inch square. Fine to bring good luck to the owner. A genuine work of art. Must be seen to be appreciated. Make good money showing them to friends, church acquaintances, etc. PRICE 15c each, 3 for 40c, 12 for $1.25, 100 for $7.50. Also obtainable in Sterling Silver, with gold edges. Price 50c each, 3 for $1.25, $4.50 per doz. Magnifying Glass for use with Midget Bible 35c

LEARN TO HYPNOTIZE

This book tells how. Explains all about Hypnotism, Suggestion, how to produce sleep, how to awaken a subject, how to hypnotize animals, hypnotism in diseases, etc. ONLY 100 p.p.d.

SERPENT'S EGGS

Box contains 12 eggs. When lighted with match, each one gradually hatches itself into a dozen or more several feet long, which coils and twists about in a most lifelike manner. Price per box, 10c postpaid. 3 for 25c

STAGE MONEY

With a bunch of these bills, it is easy for each person of limited means to appear prosperous by flashing a roll of these bills at the proper time. Looking off a genuine bill on the outside of the roll, interested will be fooled so that can be desired. Prices, pkt. 40 Bills 20c, 120 for 50c, 1.50 thousand postpaid.

STAR TOY MAKER

Greatest boys' book written. Tells how to make a Pinhole Camera, a Camera, model Railroad, a Telephone, Microphone, Telegraph Instrument, Box Kite, Talking Machine, Microscope, Electric Motor, Electric Door Bell, Water Wheel, Paper Kite, Scale of Skin, a Dog Sled, Bird House, Rabbit Yard, etc. 64 pages, 150 illustrations. PRICE 25c

BOY'S OWN TOYMAKER. A new book. Tells how to make chemical toys, electrical toys, galvanic toys, mechanical toys, paper toys, cardboard toys, Boat Models, etc. 500 illustrations. Price 25c postpaid.

FUN WITH MAGNETISM. 50 novel and amusing experiments in MAGNETISM that you can perform with the aid of an ordinary magnet. Includes dancing and spinning needle, nail and ball rocker, magnetic fish, top, motor, magnetic billiard balls, many other stunts. Also interesting information about lodestone, magnetism, electricity, etc. 10c.

BOOK ON BOATS. How to build rowing, sailing boats. Everything pertaining to boats explained in plain terms so anyone can understand. Illustrated. 100 p.p.d.

5-MINUTE HARMONICA COURSE. A new easy self-teaching method. Teaches how to play, to use the tongue, etc. Fully illustrated. Price 15c postpaid.

MONEY MAKING SECRETS. Golden opportunities for everyone. 64 page copyrighted book chock full of money-making ideas, recipes, formulas, valuable trade secrets, etc. Ideas, hints that can be started with little or no capital at home in spare time. 10c postpaid.

12 CARD TRICKS and tricks of hand. Contains all the latest and best card tricks as performed by celebrated magicians with exposure of card tricks used by professional gamblers. Price 25c postpaid.

YOUR OWN FORTUNE

With the aid of this dream book and fortune-teller. The key to your future. Will you be lucky in love? Successful in business? Will you be wealthy? Complete with dictionary of dreams with descriptions and correct interpretations, with lucky numbers, fortunate days, omens, divination, palmistry, etc. Price 50c postpaid.

PERFORMING 10c pd. SKELETON

A jointed figure of a skeleton 14 in. in height, that will dance to music and perform various gyrations and movements with the operator only to be some distance of space. Price 10c, 3 for 25c postpd.

HOW TO PITCH. Book contains lessons by leading pitchers, giving valuable information. 50 illustrations. 25c postpaid.

FORTUNE TELLING BY CARDS

64 page book tells how. Gives the meaning of each and every card, how to deal and lay them out. Everything explained in simple language. 10c postpaid.

BLANK CARTRIDGE PISTOL

Protection against Burglars, Tramps & Dogs

Prices 50c $1.00

Well made and effective; modelled on latest type of Revolver; appearance alone is enough to scare a burglar. When loaded it may be as effective as a real revolver without danger to life. It takes standard 22 Cal. Blank Cartridges obtainable everywhere. Price 50c. Superior quality, $1.00. Blank Cartridges, 50c per 100. Holster (Cowboy type) for Blank Cartridge Pistol, 50c. Shipped by Express only. Shipped by Express only. Not Prepaid.

LOOK 35¢ LOOK WONDERFUL INSTRUMENT

Greatest thing yet. Nine separate articles in one. Everybody delighted with it. Odd, Curious and interesting. Lots of pleasure as well as very useful. It is a double Microscope for examining the wonders of nature. It is also an Opera Glass, a Stereoscope, a Burning Lens, a Reading Glass, a Telescope, a Compass, a pocket Mirror, and a Lazy-scope (for examining eyes, ears, nose and throat). It is worth all the cost to locate even one painful cinder in the eye. Folds flat and fits the pocket. Something great—you need one. Don't miss it. Sent by mail. Only 35c or 3 for 5L.

MICROPHONE TRANSMITTER BUTTON

$1.00 Postpaid

You can easily make a highly sensitive detectophone by using this Transmitter Button to collect the sound waves. You can build your own outfit without buying expensive equipment. It is simple and inexpensive. You can install an outfit in your home and hear conversations being held all over the house. You can connect up different rooms of a hotel. This outfit can be used by secret service operatives during the war. It is being used on the stage. It is ultra-sensitive and is the great invention in microphones. You can mount the button almost anywhere—card board boxes, stove pipes, stuffed animals, on the wall behind a picture frame, etc. Button is so light and small it cannot be detected. Persons can be overheard without suspecting it. You can listen in on conversations in another room. A deaf person in the audience can hear the speaker. Connected to phonograph, piano or other musical instrument, music can be heard hundreds of feet away. Button may be used to renew telephone transmitters, often saving an old line "talk up" when nothing else will. The ideal microphone for radio use; carries heavy current and is extremely sensitive. Amplifies radio signals. Combines other similar uses will suggest themselves. Experimenters find the button useful for hundreds of experiments along the lines of telephones, amplifiers, loud speakers, etc. Many fascinating stunts may be devised, such as holding the button against the throat or chest to reproduce speech without sound waves. PRICE $1.00.

Little Wonder Crystal Radio Receiver $1

Say what you will about Electrical and Battery Sets, nothing will beat them all for simplicity and cheapness of tone. There is absolutely no noise and no distortion—no batteries to buy—no tubes to wear out—no maintenance expense whatsoever. Cost nothing to operate and will last indefinitely. Reception is loud and clear. This Receiver is guaranteed to work equal to the most expensive Crystal Set you can buy. Has a receiving radius of over 25 miles, or under favorable conditions up to 100 miles. Constructed of the finest materials throughout. Including supersensitive crystal, assuring quick results. PRICE of Receiver only $1.00 postpaid. Or complete with 2-Ear Phones and Aerial Wire, all complete—nothing more to buy, $2.95 postpaid. Johnson Smith & Co., Dept. 926 Racine, Wis.

Repeating and Single Shot Air Pistols

Just what you've always wanted. A powerful high grade Air Pistol, shaped like an Automatic, but harmless. A shot obtainable everywhere. Very powerful yet perfectly safe for boys to handle. Two styles—Single Shot Pistol or Repeater. The Repeater fires 50 shots in one loading. The Single Shot Pistol shoots Air Rifle Darts in addition to B. B. Shot. Well made and durable; all metal parts nickel plated; natural grain wood stocks. Front and rear sights. Weighs about 10 ounces. Better than an air rifle. Shipped by Express. Not Prepaid.

PRICES: Single Shot Pistol $2.50
50-Shot Repeating Pistol $3.95

Shoots B. B. Shots

MICROSCOPE and FLOROSCOPE

COMBINED ALL THE POWER AND DEFINITION OF THE MORE EXPENSIVE MICROSCOPE
SURPRISINGLY GREAT MAGNIFYING POWER
EXAMINE GERMS IN WATER, CHEESE, SUGAR, ETC.

There are few things so interesting and valuable as a Microscope. It enables you to minutely examine mineral specimens and vegetable specimens, to test cotton, wool, silk, seeds, water, flour, cheese, milk, and in fact nearly all articles of food. Unwholesome meat can be readily detected and germicide can be closely watched. It is exceedingly interesting to examine the spores of ferns, the eggs, eyes, feet, skin and other formations, the dust (scales) from moth and butterfly wings, human hairs, fine and insects, while the animalcules in water are a powerful source of wonder. Most interesting experiments can be performed with an instrument such as this. Place a small piece of cheese in a box and allow insects to feed on it for a day or two. Then examine a tiny portion of the cheese under the Microscope and you will see little animalcules, magnified to the size of large beetles; you can count their legs and the joints in them, the cracks or claws upon each foot, also the hair or bristles upon their bodies. Or, place some stagnant water; deposit a small portion of scum on the object glass of the Microscope with a pin's head, and you will see beautiful animalcules swimming about with as much freedom as though they were fish in the ocean. Microscope is a truly wonderful sight and an endless source of interest and enjoyment for everybody. The Microscope is made of brass and is capable of magnifying 150 areas, and although small and compact, it will cover a very wide scope of microscopic research. PRICE ONLY 50c Postpaid.

BOOK ON MICROSCOPY. A study of microscopic world—astonishing results from use of microscope. See and study germs, foods, plant life, insects. 10 chapters, 50 illustrations. Absorbingly fascinating. 25c.

MAKE YOUR OWN RADIO RECEIVING SET

Enjoy the concerts, baseball games, market reports, latest news, etc. Make simple, lightning "EXPERIMENT RADIO SETS" shown how to make and operate inexpensive Radio Sets, the materials for which can be purchased for a mere trifle. Also tells how to build a short-wave Receiver for listening in to foreign stations, police calls, ships at sea, etc. ONLY 15c. postpaid.

SILENT DEFENDER

Used by police officers, detectives, sheriffs, night watchmen and others as a means of self-protection. Very effective. Easily fits the hand, the fingers being grasped in the four holes. Very useful in an emergency. Made of aluminum they are very light, weighing less than 2 ounces. Handy pocket size always ready for instant use. PRICE 25c each, 2 for 45c postpaid.

THE BUDDY PHONE

A Real Telephone. Works indoors or Outdoors. Though this is merely a very clever toy, it is quite as serviceable for short distances as the most elaborate apparatus made and it is much less liable to get out of order or to need adjustment; in fact it cannot be rendered inefficient unless roughly handled. No troublesome battery, no intricate "hook-up." Can be put to practical use from one room to another, up or down stairs, around corners, etc. The patented sounding disc transmits and receives the voice perfectly, making it a really practical talking telephone. Set consists of two phones, transmission cord and full instructions. Price only 65c per set complete.

WONDERFUL X-RAY TUBE

A wonderful little instrument producing optical illusions both surprising and startling. With it you can see what is apparently the bones of your fingers, the lead in a lead pencil, the interior opening in a pipe stem, and many other similar illusions. Price 10c, 3 for 25c.

Exploding Matches

10c

More fun than fighting with your wife. They look like ordinary matches but explode with a loud bang when lit. 12 matches to a box. PRICE 10c per box, 3 boxes 25c, or 75c per dozen boxes. Not Shipped by Express. Not Prepaid.

ITCHING Powder

This is another good practical joke. It causes disconcertion of your victims to everyone but themselves is thoroughly enjoyable. All that is necessary to start the ball rolling is to deposit a little of the powder on a person's hand and the powder can be rolled upon to do the rest. The result is a vigorous scratch, they come more scratch and still more scratch. Per box, 3 boxes for 25c or 75c per dozen. Shipped by Express.

ANARCHIST BOMBS

One of these aloes vial dropped in a room full of people will cause more consternation than a limburger cheese. Use small entirely disappears in a short time. 12 Bottles for 25c, 3 Bottles for 25c, 75c per doz. dozen, or $7.50 per gross. Bottles shipped by Express. Not Prepaid.

SNEEZING POWDER

Place a very small amount of this powder on the back of your hand and blow it into the air, and watch them sneeze without knowing the reason why. It is most amazing to hear their remarks, as they never suspect the real source, but think they have caught a cold from another. Between the laughing and sneezing you yourself will be having the time of your life. For parties, political meetings or rather, at any place at all where there is a gathering of people, it is the greatest joke yet. PRICE 10c, 3 for 25c, 75c per dozen. Shipped by Express. Not Prepaid.

COMICAL MOTTO RINGS

Lots of harmless fun and amusement wearing these rings. Made in platinoid finish (looks remarkably like platinum), with wording on enameled, as illustrated. Price 25c. ea. Postpaid.

MAGIC MADE EASY 250 MAGIC TRICKS

An excellent little book containing 250 Parlor Tricks, tricks with cards, coins, handkerchiefs, eggs, rings, glasses, etc. So simple that a child can perform them. Profusely illus. Sent postpd. to any address for only 10c. 3 copies for 25c postpaid.

LATEST CATALOG

JOHNSON SMITH & CO. REACINE WIS.

JOHNSON SMITH & CO., Dept. 926 Racine, Wis.

A copy of our NEW DE LUXE CATALOG mailed on receipt of 25c. Handsome cloth binding. Bigger and better than ever. Only book of its kind in existence. Nearly 300 pages of all the latest tricks in magic, the newest novelties, puzzles, games, sporting goods, rubber stamps, unusual and interesting books, curiosities in seeds and plants, etc., unprocurable elsewhere. Result by Coin, Money Order, Check or Canadian U. S. Postage Stamps, for all articles listed above. Canadian money, stamps and Postal Notes accepted if 10% added for Exchange.

ADDRESS ORDERS FOR ALL GOODS ON THIS PAGE TO JOHNSON SMITH & CO. DEPT. 961 Racine, Wis.

"One Week from To-night You'll See PROOF that I can make You a New Man!"

NOTE—No other man in the world has ever *Dared* make such an offer!

Charles Atlas

My amazing discovery, "Dynamic Tension," changed me from a 97-lb. *weakling* into the "CHAMPION" you see here—holder of the title "The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man," won in open competition in the only National and International Contests held during the past 15 years.

I GIVE MORE than "promises." I give PROOF! If you're sick and tired of half-baked ideas—if you really want a build like mine—then one week, just 7 DAYS, is all I need to prove I can give it to you!

You've got a body, man. Why not make it a real handsome man's body! There's NO good reason why you shouldn't have rippling cords of mighty muscle across your neck and shoulders. No reason at all why your chest shouldn't be strapping, big and husky like mine—your arms and legs powerful—your wind lasting—your vigor and pep 100%!

I used to be a sickly, half-pint runt weighing only 97 lbs. — a "laughing-stock" wherever I went. No fun. No friends. Right there I almost "fell" for some of these freak spring or weight contraptions to make me "strong." But THEN — by the luckiest break of my life — I discovered **Dynamic Tension.**

Apparatus is OUT!

Look at me now. You don't see any skinny, flabby, no-account bag of bones here, do you? This is what my remarkable secret has done for my body. Twice—against all comers—I have won the title, "World's Most Perfectly Developed Man." No wonder I've got no use for tricky weights, pulleys or machines that may strain your heart of other vital organs. I've found the natural way to build the husky, solid fighting muscles that Nature means for you to have! And I've shown thousands of other fellows, many of them probably much worse off than you, how to develop themselves into champions MY way!

I'll give you clean-cut health inside, too—show you exactly how to get rid of constipation, poor digestion, bad breath, pimples, and other conditions that are robbing you of the good times and things in life that can be yours.

Now make me PROVE I can do it. Let me send you the FREE Book that opens the door to he-man living. Just tell me where to send it. Use the coupon. There's no obligation. But—be MAN enough to send the coupon NOW!

Mail Coupon for FREE BOOK

My big book, "Everlasting Health and Strength"—packed with actual photographs and vital facts every fellow must know to face life—tells the whole remarkable story of Dynamic Tension. Privately printed for me, it's FREE if you act AT ONCE. Are you ready to learn my secret? — ready to learn how I can give YOU the kind of body that will make you a masterful leader? Then tell me where to send your copy of my book. Fill in the coupon below, and mail TODAY to me personally. Address:

CHARLES ATLAS, Dept. 77-8, 133 E. 23rd Street, New York City

MAIL COUPON FOR FREE BOOK

CHARLES ATLAS
Dept. 77-8,
133 E. 23d Street,
New York City

I want the proof that your system of Dynamic Tension will make a New Man of me — give me healthy, husky body and big muscle development. Send me your free book, "Everlasting Health and Strength."

Name.....

Address.....
(Please print or write plainly)

City.....

State.....

© 1933 C. A. Ltd.

Missing Page

Inside Back Cover

Missing Page

Back Cover